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TO INTEREST, TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

No. 681,] TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING AUGUST 6, 19

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FILTER
has ... applied Typhoid
fever ... disappeared."

The ... Filter awarded
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PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

TO INTEREST TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

YOUR SPECIAL ATTENTION
is called to the following attractions in this issue of *Pearson's Weekly*:

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PRIZE OF £5 A WEEK FOR LIFE	67
THE COST OF ANOTHER'S CRIME (fascinating new serial)	73
RECOLLECTIONS OF A GOVERNESS (as told to FERGUS HUME, author of "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab")	79
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No. 681. TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING AUGUST 6, 1903. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. TWOPENCE.

A WORTHLESS ASSET.

"DID you believe him when he said he loved you?"

"No, I didn't."

"Did you believe him when he told you of his great wealth?"

"No."

"Then there is no harm done."

"Yes, there is. I was goose enough to believe that the ring he gave me was a real diamond."

SHE: "But why look so blue? Papa says he will buy all my clothes after we are married."

He: "I was wondering what we should have to eat."

"GOOD-MORNING, madam. I have come to tune your piano."

"Why, I haven't sent for a piano-tuner!"

"No; but the man in the house next door did."

BASE INGRATITUDE.

GRACIE, aged five, had just recovered from measles, when her small brother took the same complaint.

Upon becoming convalescent he was sitting up munching a sponge-cake, while his sister sat looking on.

By various means she tried to induce him to part with a bit of the dainty, but the invalid took no notice. He ate steadily on; but just as the last bites were disappearing, Gracie could stand it no longer, and she exclaimed indignantly:

"Just look at him! He won't give me a crumb, and it was me that gave him the measles!"

"COME, old man, tell us where you got the courage to propose to your wife?"

"They told me she had taken a vow never to marry."

"ALL I demand for my client," shouted the counsel, in the voice of a man who was paid for it, "is justice!"

"I'm very sorry I can't accommodate you," replied the judge, "but the law won't allow me to give him more than fourteen years."

COUNTRY OR SEASIDE?

THE reason that so many people prefer the seaside to the country, as a place wherein to spend their holidays, is that comparatively few of the town-bred inhabitants of these islands know what there is to be seen in the country districts.

The country is too slow; they must go to the seaside, where there is some life! Even if they sit on the beach for hours together, merely watching and listening to the lapping of the waves, there is more life in it for them than they would find at an old farm or a private house in the country.

The explanation of this preference is to be found largely in the fact that the town-bred individual does not understand the scenery. Everything he sets his eyes upon has no life in it.

But mark the difference between the townsman and the person reared in the country! Every blade of grass says something to him; he sees life everywhere, he can point out beauty when the townsman can see nothing; he shows you the places where you are likely to find birds, ants, and other living creatures; he tries to enable you to distinguish the peculiar walks or movements of one bird as compared with another—he can tell them when the eye cannot distinctly grasp their forms; and he makes the country appear a veritable fairyland to the town-bred individual!

If our town children were taught more about the country, if our adults would learn more about Nature when they chance to walk in parks and rural lanes, the seaside would lose much of its predominance, and the country would charm and tranquillise the jaded town dweller.

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THE ANGEL AND THE GIFT.

It comes through the falling twilight,
Over the darkening lands,
An Angel of peace and pity,
With healing and hope in its hands;
Unseen, unheard, around us
It folds its golden wings,
And our hearts forget their sorrows,
So sweet is the gift it brings!

It whispers to weary children,
And lulls them to happy sleep,
It speaks to the lonely mourners
And bids them no longer weep.
It weaves a thread of gladness
Into life's web of care,
And leads us into a dream-world
Than this world far more fair!

It calms the fevered spirit,
It comforts the troubled heart,
The doubts and the fears that the day brings
'Neath its magic spell depart;
And our souls by its tender presence
Are hallowed and soothed and blest,
For the name of the Angel is Slumber,
And the gift that it brings is Rest!

HE WAS NOT IMPOSED UPON.

A LITTLE diplomacy goes a long way, as Willie realises. There was an old woman who had a fruit shop near the house where he stayed, and, like some of the personages in his fairy tales, she had only one eye. Moreover, she had the appearance of not being too well supplied with this world's riches. Putting these things together, Willie resolved to work upon the feelings of his grandmother, an old lady to whom the needy never appealed in vain.

Going up to her one day, Willie said:

"Grandma, give me another penny to give to a poor old woman who has only one eye."

The old lady was touched by the boy's solicitude for this object of pity.

"Well, Willie," she replied, "as I like to encourage your little sympathetic heart, here it is; now, I hope you are not being imposed upon?"

"Oh, no, grandma," said Willie, as he clutched the penny in his little fingers; "every time I give her a penny I get two nice oranges!"

SUPPER AND DREAMS.

ON a certain occasion at Monte Carlo the decorous quiet which usually reigns in the Salon d'Or was amusingly ruffled. Just before the beginning of the play, a gentleman walked up to the tables, deliberately counted out a lot of banknotes, in value about £480, and placed them on black. This somewhat unusual occurrence of staking a maximum before the play for the day had begun naturally attracted attention, and a bystander remarked:

"Rather bold play, sir."

"Well," said the player, "I dreamt last night that I saw this table exactly as it is now, and on the first coup black won."

The cards being duly cut, the tailleur proceeded, watched by the onlookers with unusual interest, to deal out the cards for the first coup, and black won.

A suppressed "Oh!" from the bystanders greeted the announcement, and then from across the table came, in tones of agonised intreaty, a lady's voice:

"What did you have for supper last night? Do tell me!"

AUNTIE: "Do you let your husband have a room to himself?"

Mrs. McBride: "Oh, yes; of course, he must have a place to smoke in."

Auntie: "You poor dear, I see your future through a rain of tears. He'll sneak off there and lock himself in whenever you want to talk to him seriously. You mark my words."

A SUFFICIENT REASON.

AN Irishman, unable to get work in his own country, came over to England to look for it, and was lucky enough to find it.

The first Saturday night, when he got his wages, he went to buy a dozen eggs. He was charged a shilling for them. He was aghast.

"A shilling?" said he; "is it a shilling for a dozen of eggs? Why, sure, when I was in Ireland I could buy a dozen of eggs for sixpence."

"Then why didn't you stay there?"

"Because I hadn't the sixpence to buy them with."

HOUSEMAID: "I overheard the missus tellin' a caller the other day that I was 'no good.'"

Butler: "Well, isn't that what listeners generally hear of themselves?"

WIFE: "When you proposed to me, John, did you think I would accept you?"

Husband: "Not the first time."

"The second?"

"I wasn't going to propose but once."

NOT "CALLING."

AT the close of a christening ceremony in a certain church the interested parties, as usual, repaired to the vestry.

While the curate was entering the names in the register, one good lady appeared to think that he was asking a number of unnecessary questions.

When her turn came she stepped up to the table with the avowed intention to "stand no himperence."

"Father's name?" asked the clergyman, without raising his eyes from the register.

"John Smith."

"Calling?"

"No, 'e ain't!"

"Excuse me!" ejaculated the curate, in mild surprise, "I said his calling."

"An' I sez 'e ain't!" snapped the lady. "'E's a 'awker, right enough, but 'e ain't callin', 'cos 'e's deaf an' dumb. An' now, mister, mebbe you'll mind your own business an' I'll mind mine!"

And it took half a dozen people as many minutes to convince the lady of her mistake.

MRS. BELLA DONNA: "My husband ages much more rapidly than I do."

Mrs. Plaster (ambiguously): "Of course, he has so much more to worry him."

YOUNG LADY: "I should like to give my intended a little surprise before our marriage. What would you recommend?"

Lady Friend: "Don't wear your false teeth just for once."

SUN DRUNK.

THE expression that an individual has been "out in the sun," which is a euphemistic way of saying that he is not in so sober a condition as he ought to be, appears to have a solid foundation in fact. Like many other sayings, it is a statement of a well-known condition in another part of the world.

To become sun drunk is a condition into which anyone may fall in the tropics. Exposure to the sun's rays will reduce a man to a condition almost exactly resembling drunkenness. He staggers about, and is usually compelled to lie down and "sleep it off." Sun drunkenness is sometimes accompanied by nausea.

The saying above quoted was probably introduced here by sailors or colonists. It is also to be remembered that, when the sun's rays are very powerful here, there is likely to be more liquid refreshment taken, with the probable result that there will be more drunkenness.

Another curious fact in connection with life in the tropics, where the sun rises at the same time all the year round, is that if you do not get up before sunrise, you do not feel well all day; you feel heavy, out of sorts, and have a tendency to sickness.

AN UNCONVENTIONAL ESCAPADE.

THE HONOURABLE MABEL VERCROFT was just a little weary. A continuous round of balls, dinner parties, and similar excitements are apt, like duty, to become irksome, and she sighed—not like Alexander for fresh worlds to conquer—but to enter.

The Honourable Mabel—"Maba" her most intimate friends called her—was weary, so weary that for once she hardly touched any breakfast. Her appetite, if it be correct to allude to such things, was somewhat terrifying to her mother, though it accounted for her healthy cheeks—her beauty was not of the pale, patrician order—and, as a rule, the first meal was the heartiest of the day. But this morning she was distinctly out of sorts, playing distractedly with her knife and fork as she reflected that the day's programme included calls on people she "didn't care a rap for," as she vulgarly put it.

"Must we really go, mother?" she asked of the stately, white-haired lady who sat at the opposite end of the table. "It's a beastly nuisance!"

"Mabel, child!" interrupted Lady Vercroft angrily. "Where do you learn such slang? 'Beastly' is hardly a correct expression to use."

"Well, but it is beastly, mother, really. And if it is, one might just as well say so!"

"Nothing of the sort," responded her parent severely. "The English language provides a vocabulary so extensive that you and I can find expressions quite different from those used by the lower orders."

The girl did not answer, for she knew what would follow. Whenever her mother mentioned the "lower orders" she ended in talking of her pet dislikes—Radicals and the County Council. Mabel sighed instead, and glanced at a calendar that hung on the wall.

"Why, to-day's Bank Holiday!" she exclaimed. "I'd quite forgotten."

"Yes," answered Lady Vercroft stiffly. "In my opinion the working classes have too many holidays nowadays."

"Oh, no! People who work can't have too many of them—they're so necessary. I wish I were something to do with a bank."

"Why?"

"Because I should have a holiday. If one day's just the same as another you don't get a holiday at all, do you?"

Lady Vercroft rose; her daughter's ideas were quite at variance with her own, and the best way to prevent defeat in an argument is to avoid getting into one. She moved towards the door.

"Oh, mother, dear!"

"Yes, what is it?"

"You don't mind my spending the day at Mrs. Rossiter's?" Mrs. Rossiter was the only married friend of her acquaintance Mabel cared for, and an idea had just entered her head.

"I expected you to help me with my calls."

"Oh, no! I should only be rude, and you wouldn't wish me to be rude, would you? Let me do what I like to-day, mother—there's a dear! It's Bank Holiday. I shan't want the brougham, and Jack Rossiter will see me home, I daresay."

Lady Vercroft hesitated as she gazed at her daughter's handsome figure, at the pleading expression in her eyes, which the masses of rich, dark hair only accentuated. Finally she melted, as she usually did.

"Well, yes, then. Mr. Rossiter, as you say, will doubtless take care of you."

The girl threw her arms around her mother's neck and kissed her, and when the latter, after a transparent show of displeasure at such excessive demonstrativeness, had disengaged herself, the Hon. Mabel rushed upstairs. She had decided to have a holiday—"a real holiday," she told herself, as she hastily put on her hat and drew on her gloves, and "on her own"—a vulgarism which would have immeasurably shocked Lady Vercroft could she have heard it.

But she did not, and it was fortunate, or it might have prevented a visit made a few minutes later to a dingy little wardrobe dealer's in a back street, hardly a stone's throw from the Vercroft mansion. The shop was closed, but after much knocking a stout, perspiring woman came to the door. Mabel at once stated her errand, and the woman shook her head dubiously.

"'Ardly what yer want," she remarked; "but come in, I'll see as what I can do."

The girl followed into the stuffy, close-smelling shop, while the woman turned over a miscellaneous assortment of skirts and other articles of raiment of all hues and sizes.

"Yer see," she observed, as she laid them one by one on the counter, "we ain't got no call for sech things. Yer wants to go heast—this is west. Mostly hupper servants an' sech like about 'ere. 'Ow's this?"

She held up a dazzling costume of green plush.

"Capital!" cried the Hon. Mabel. "And now, er—well, a coat with buttons—the larger the better. Like the factory girls wear, you know."

"The very thing. Just about fit yer, I should say."

Mabel eyed the garment displayed for her inspection critically, and thought that with a little alteration it might do.

"'At, yer said? Must be large, an' 'ave a horstrich feather. Any objection ter this?"

Miss Vercroft removed her own picturesque hat, and poised the striking creation on her head—it had formerly been the property of a female who had parted with it to pay the rent. The effect, as seen in the cracked handglass the woman held before her, was satisfactory.

"That'll do nicely," she said. "Can you send them?" giving the address of Mrs. Rossiter.

The woman had no doubt she could, and then suddenly glanced at the girl's dainty shoes.

"'Ere, that won't do! Yer want boots; buttons, an' plenty of 'em!"

The Hon. Mabel had quite overlooked the question of footgear. A pair, however, were forthcoming, lined in brilliant crimson, with beautifully scalloped tops, and which boasted some eighteen or more buttons. Eminently satisfied, she left.

Mrs. Rossiter at first rather threw cold water on the project, but it was a trait of Miss Vercroft's character that the more opposition given to a thing on which she had set her heart the firmer became her resolve to secure it. And in the end, of course, Mabel's friend gave way, and when a villainously dirty boy brought the purchases home wrapped in an old newspaper she had already entered into the spirit of the whole thing.

"And you won't be later than nine o'clock, dearest?" said Mrs. Rossiter, when her costume was complete. "I do wish Jack could see you. He would die of laughter."

"Thanks!" murmured Mabel haughtily. "I'll go out the back way, if you please."

When at last Miss Vercroft found herself in the streets, and quite alone, a great fear stole over her. The green plush in which she was enveloped dazzled her eyes, as it doubtless did others, the big floppy hat was uncomfortable, the great buttons on her coat seemed to glare aggressively, and the sleeves being slightly too long were puckered up over her delicate wrists.

At the corner of the street she waited for an omnibus to take her to the station. A couple of youths smoking big cigars—for it was Bank Holiday—eyed her admiringly.

"Got 'em on!" said one, with a wink and a leer. "Ain't 'e turned up yet?"

The Hon. Mabel's red cheeks grew redder, and she glared indignantly.

"Oh! orl right, 'orty!" remarked the other, as they passed on arm in arm. "We won't make 'im jellus."

Mabel stifled what sounded remarkably like a sob, and the omnibus which came up at that moment was a distinct relief. She clambered to the top, and the conductor, as he took her fare, remarked upon the weather in a very familiar tone. When she did not condescend to reply the man seemed astonished.

"Really," thought Mabel, "I sha'n't be a success unless I'm less 'orty'—to quote that horrid man."

When, however, she had succeeded in squeezing herself into a third class carriage bound for Hampstead, her confidence began to return. There were extra passengers wedged in on either side of the compartment while others were standing in the gangway, yet nobody seemed to mind. On the contrary, she noticed that the courting couples seemed rather to appreciate it than otherwise.

The girl was covertly watching one particularly demonstrative pair when she caught the glance of a man who sat in the corner opposite her. He was tall, and had rather nice eyes, and but for his absurd costume would almost have been handsome, the girl thought. Evidently he was dressed for the occasion, for the big check suit was of a typical East-end pattern—the trousers enlarged at the bottoms—and he wore a hard felt billycock hat, which rested at a painfully acute angle at the side of his head. Round his neck was twisted a silk scarf, and a little soap and water might have improved the condition of his hands.

Yet the face was a striking one, and Mabel could not help noticing the fact. It was even intellectual, and she would have liked, just as an experiment, to have seen how he looked in the attire of a gentleman.

The man appeared to be studying her just as intently, and she noticed that, like herself, he was alone.

"Shut the winder, miss?"

They were nearing the girl's destination, and the wind was blowing in rather uncomfortably. She was about to thank him when the reflection of the green plush reminded her that for the moment she was not the Hon. Mabel Vercroft. She said instead:

"'Tain't o' no consequence, I'm all right."

"Bit cold on the 'Eath, sh'd sye?" the man observed. "'Igh up, yer know."

Mabel had never been on the Heath in her life, but she said she "s'posed it was," and, looking out of the window, congratulated herself that her "'ortiness" was disappearing. But during the last half hour she had learnt a good deal.

At Hampstead Heath station she alighted, and soon became mixed up with the crowd.

Out in the open air the Hon. Mabel was at a loss which way to proceed, but judged that by following the crowd she would not go far wrong—all roads that day led to the "'Eath." Meanwhile many of the younger fellows, without wives or other responsibilities, gave her winks intended to be irresistible, or made remarks she failed to interpret, though occasionally she succeeded in giving vent to a giggle such as she had seen other girls do.

But once on the glorious Heath her spirits revived. A roundabout filled her with wonder and amazement; she had never been so close to one before. She gazed delightedly at the whirling holiday makers, and the steam organ which ground out popular airs with horse-power vigour reminded her not a little of a Wagner concert.

Presently the roundabout stopped; then Mabel felt someone clutch her arm, and before she could resist found herself sitting sideways on one of the wooden horses next to a fully-developed, rosy-cheeked girl of about her own age.

"Saw yer in the tryne," said her companion, nodding her head by way of introduction. "It's all right; I'll treat yer. Know wot it is ter be lonely myself."

The whistle blew, and the roundabout started again on its mad career. The novel delight of being whirled round and round made Mabel somewhat giddy, and she was thankful when the pennyworth was accomplished.

"'Ave another?" asked her newly-found friend. "P'raps yer'd rather 'ave a swing?"

Mabel shook her head and alighted, and then her companion put her arm through the girl's.

"My nyme's Liza, wot's your'n?"

Miss Vercroft was rather at a loss to answer.

"Daisy," she said at last hesitatingly.

"Dysy! Oh, that's prime! I took ter yer at first, I did. I ses ter myself, I ses, that's a nice gel over there, an' all alone. The blokes when they sees 'er'll be on' 'er like winkin'. Ain't yer got no bloke?"

The question was sudden, but Mabel promptly answered, "No."

"Nar! 'Tain't much loss!" Liza answered, with a shrug. "All right for a day's outin', not for longer. 'Ad dozens in me time, dozens of 'em, an' ain't spliced yet. No, an' don't mean ter be!"

"No!" exclaimed the girl.

"Nar! Not till the old 'un dies, do I take on with a bloke, an' then only one as 'as got work reglar. What d'yer do fer a livin'?"

"Er—er—I work at a fact'ry." Mabel hoped the answer would pass muster.

"That's strynge, so der I. Gits eight bob a week. 'Tain't much, but we manages ter do it—me an' the old 'un."

"Old woman?" queried Mabel.

"Yuss, me mother. We ain't millionaires, but we're 'appy."

The Hon. Mabel Vercroft, tired and satiated with Society, looked at the healthy face of the girl at her side. Providence had not blessed her with much money, but had given what was more important still—a robust constitution. She sighed.

"Ain't yer 'appy?" asked Liza, glancing at her companion with much concern. "'Ave a swing?"

Mabel smiled, shook her head, and they strolled on.

Not far off, near the "cocoanut shies," some dozens of couples were dancing to the strains of a piano organ, while a large crowd had gathered round watching and applauding their efforts.

"Come on!" cried Liza, who was overflowing with life and animation. "Come on; we'll show 'em wot's wot."

She tugged at the girl's arm, and a second later they were in the centre of the ring. Liza rested her disengaged arm akimbo on her hip; Mabel, excited, copied her, and the couple in this fantastic fashion joined the dancers. It is just possible that Miss Vercroft had never had such a time of unrestrained mirth before.

The music ceased, and, as they stopped, panting, Mabel heard the click of a camera. She looked round, without discovering whence it proceeded, and then Liza dragged her off to a refreshment stall near by, where strictly non-alcoholic drinks were being retailed. Miss Vercroft insisted on paying, but when she fumbled in the mysterious recesses of the green plush a blank look stole over her face. She had left her purse in the train.

"Orl right," said Liza. "Yer've left it at 'ome, I s'pose. Done it myself, afore now."

Mabel blushed, and then someone stepped behind them.

"Don't trouble, gals!" cried a voice, laying a coin on the table. "I'll square it."

The girl looked up, and saw the interesting person who had sat opposite her in the train. She was about to expostulate, but trade was brisk in the refreshment department, and the proprietor had already pocketed the cash.

"Thank yer," said Liza.

"Thank yer," echoed Mabel.

The man smiled.

"I say, yer ought to be on the styge, yer ought," he remarked. "The two prettiest gals I've ever seed in me life!"

Liza tossed her head.

"I've 'eard that afore, ain't you, Dysy?" she remarked.

"Daisy" laughed, and the man drew an arm through those of the girls.

"Let's 'ave a stroll ter cool down like," he said.

Mabel looked at her companion, and, seeing she offered no objection, made no remonstrance either. She had heard that many an honest heart beat beneath a ragged coat, but unfortunately it belonged to the "lower orders."

They strolled on towards the Spaniards and the Vale of Health. Presently, Liza espying a gentleman acquaintance, Miss Vercroft was left alone with her gallant knight errant.

"I say, Dysy," he remarked. "Yer don't mind me sayin' it, but yer dif'rent from the other girls on the 'Eath some'ow. Yer fit ter be a lydy."

Mabel giggled.

"Am I?" she said. "Yer gettin' at me, ain't yer?"

"No, I ain't," he answered earnestly. "I was a noticin' it in the tryne. Yer could look like a lydy if yer wanted ter, easy!"

"'Ow?" she asked. Miss Vercroft was enjoying the comedy immensely.

"Why," he answered, "fust, do away with that." He touched her fringe, the fringe she had thought so realistic, very gently.

"Garn!" she said. "I like fringes."

"Don't hinterrupt! An' green—well, it don't suit yer. An' green plush—strike me erlive!"

"Don't yer wife wear it?" she asked sharply.

"Ain't got one, more's the pity. I'd like ter 'ave though, if she was like you."

She tossed her head coquettishly.

"Oh, if that's it, I'll go 'ome."

"No yer don't, Dysy," he answered "Yer've got to

How Don Q. outwitted Don Luis is told in the August PEARSON'S.

☞ THOSE WHO WISH TO ENTER THIS COMPETITION NOW MAY DO SO BY PAYING TWO SHILLINGS AND FOURPENCE TO THEIR NEWSVENDOR, WHO WILL OBTAIN FOR THEM ALL THE PICTURES UP-TO-DATE. OR THESE PICTURES WILL BE SENT POST FREE FOR TWO SHILLINGS AND TENPENCE, BY THE PUBLISHER, "PEARSON'S WEEKLY," HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C. ☜

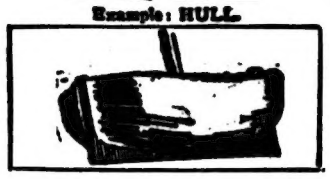
£5 a WEEK for LIFE!

(Which will NOT be divided.)

AND A FURTHER SUM OF

£1,000 CASH DOWN.

Example: HULL.



CUT ACROSS HERE.

OPPOSITE you will find some pictures. Each of these pictures consists of certain objects which, either singly or collectively, represent the name of a railway station in the United Kingdom.

What you have to do is to find the railway station with the longest name made up entirely from the names of objects depicted in each picture (or from words which have the same sound). See example shown above.

An "object" does not include sky or shading necessary for correct drawing.

Before you begin, examine the example shown, which will make the matter clear.

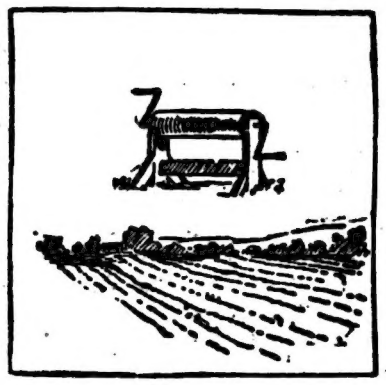
Taking this as a guide, you have now to examine the pictures below, and discover the name of the railway station which each of them represents, under the conditions which appeared last week, and which will appear again shortly. When you have done this, write the name down in the space provided, and KEEP THE PAGE BY YOU. A SET OF PICTURES WILL APPEAR EACH WEEK.

The prize of £5 a Week for Life will be paid to the competitor from whom the Editors of *Pearson's Weekly* and *The Big Budget* actually receive the complete series of pictures containing the greatest number of correct solutions and fulfilling the conditions printed below. A further sum of £1,000 will be divided in the following manner among those who come next: First Consolation Cash Gift, £100; Second Cash Gift, £50; Third Cash Gift, £50; Fourth Cash Gift, £25; Fifth Cash Gift, £25; Sixth Cash Gift, £25; Seventh Cash Gift, £25; Eighth to Fifty-seventh Cash Gifts, £10 each; Fifty-eighth to Ninety-seventh Cash Gifts, £5 each.

This same prize is offered in THE BIG BUDGET (one penny, every Thursday). There are not two prizes of £5 a Week for Life, but ONE prize of £5 a Week for Life for PEARSON'S WEEKLY and BIG BUDGET readers combined. This also applies to the consolation gifts.

163.....

164.....



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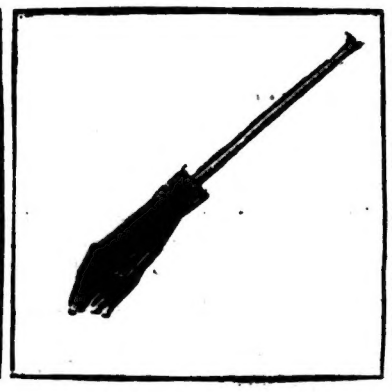

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Name..... Address.....

come over the way an' 'ave tea. Tea an' s'rimps, ninepence."

She laughed.

"Don't yer like s'rimps?" he asked.

"I—I've never ——" She remembered in time that it would never do to disavow an acquaintance with shrimps.

"Oh, yuss," she answered.

They had tea together, and Mabel thoroughly enjoyed it.

"I must go 'ome," she remarked, at last, "afore it's dark."

"Must yer? But I shall see yer agen?" he added fervently.

Mabel shook her head tantalisingly.

"Dunno. But yer can take me ter the stashun."

They rose, and presently came across Liza with her "bloke." She was still in high spirits, and slapped Mabel on the back effusively.

"'Ad a good time? So've I. Good to be alive, ain't it?"

The girl acquiesced, and the couples walked on together towards the railway station. Whilst they were waiting for the train—the man having gone to purchase the tickets—Mabel judiciously extracted Liza's address from her.

"We've only got one room—me an' the old 'un," she said; "but yer as welcome as the flow'rs in May, an' don't yer forgit it!"

Mabel said she wouldn't; the train came in, and they were separated. But Miss Vercroft's cavalier still clung to her.

They sat next to each other, and several stations came and went without their exchanging a word. The man's eyes, however, were eloquent.

"Dysy," he said at last. "I want ter see yer agen. Where d'yer live?"

"Can't tell yer. Mother don't like me takin' people 'ome."

"I shall see yer soon, anyways."

"'Fraid not."

"Why?"

"Reasons."

"Don't care!" he said hotly. "I've got yer foty-grarf, so I sha'n't forgit yer."

"What!" cried Mabel horrified.

The man felt in his pocket, and drew out a small five-shilling hand camera. As she saw it the girl was alarmed. She remembered the click she had heard; supposing this man found out who she really was, and by some means or other her mother should see the photograph? She would not risk it; suddenly she seized the camera from the man's hand and threw it out of the window.

"What d'yer do that for?" he asked.

The train had stopped at her destination now; she rose, and glared at him like a tragedy queen.

"My photograph is copyright," she answered haughtily, her words strangely at variance with her attire. "Please remember that!"

And she was gone, leaving the man bewildered.

* * * * * *

The Homburg season was in full swing. Everybody who was anybody was there, and Lady Vercroft and her daughter sipped the waters every day religiously. To Mabel the memory of her Bank Holiday escapade had grown exceedingly dim; all she seemed to remember was a whirling and not altogether modest dance, and a pair of brown, earnest eyes. The rest was vague and misty, and even Mrs. Rossiter (in private) had ceased to talk of it now. And Liza—she hoped she and the old 'un were happier than ever—the money someone had sent them anonymously would be useful.

One morning Lady Vercroft, despite the "cure," was feeling unwell, and Mabel sallied forth to the springs alone. As she awaited her turn to receive the medicinal water, she happened to glance at her neighbour. And her neighbour—a handsome, fashionably dressed man—had been gazing at her all the while. Mabel started. Those grave eyes!—surely they were identical with a pair she had seen a month or two since.

The man smiled, and raised his hat.

"We have met, I think," he said, "though under different circumstances. If I may have the presumption to remind you ——"

"Oh, oh!" gasped Mabel, alarmed. "It is you; I thought so! I don't know who you are, but please don't refer to that—that episode."

"Your wishes are law." The man bowed. "I was wondering whether we should ever meet again."

"Really! What for?"

"For five shillings, the price of a smashed camera."

The girl laughed.

"For the camera?" she repeated.

"For the camera," he insisted. "But the negative was priceless."

Mabel reddened.

"I will pay you," she answered. "But ——"

"Suppose we explain. You were masquerading that day, I think. You unconsciously betrayed yourself when you said—er—good-bye. But I was equally guilty, I was masquerading also—which you never suspected. Seeking local colour. My name's Gilbert Lawrence."

"The great novelist!"

He smiled.

"You flatter me, but I hope you'll remain true to that adjective a little while for my sake. It may impress your mother—you remember you said you'd a mother?"

"Why should she wish to be impressed?" she asked loftily.

He looked at her tenderly.

"Some other time I hope to tell you," he answered. "And your name?"

"Vercroft—Mabel Vercroft."

"Not Dysy?" And he laughed good-humouredly.

Lady Vercroft was pleased to "know" Mr. Lawrence: he was wealthy, well-connected, and popular. The same evening the celebrated novelist continued the theme he had commenced that morning.

"Mabel," he asked fervently. "Will you marry me?"

Her answer was speedy.

"Oh, yuss," she said. "I'll tyke yer!"

The last instalment of "The Amethyst Box," Anna Katharine Green's serial story, will be found in the August LADY'S MAGAZINE.

Pledges that Pawnbrokers Refuse

You can't Get a Penny on Live Stock.

Dutch Clocks also cannot be Pledged.

Neither can Glass Table Lamps and Silk Hats.

It is well-nigh impossible to pawn a concertina, however valuable, in the West End of London. That, at any rate, is the conclusion arrived at, after bitter experience, by one of our best-known variety hall artistes.

Almost equally impossible is it for a young man to pawn coral, diamonds, or valuable jewellery early in the morning in the neighbourhood of Hatton Garden. In this locality pawnbrokers look askance at the early morning caller, and if the "customer" chance to be of youthful appearance, "uncle's" suspicions are redoubled. This is not without just cause, for, as everybody knows, Hatton Garden is the centre of London's diamond trade, and police records show that on many occasions in the past dishonest clerks and office boys have opened letters addressed to their employers, and have then hastened with the loose diamonds or other valuables they contained to the nearest pawnbroker's, their one idea apparently being

"ready money at any risk."

Live animals are pledges that all pawnbrokers absolutely refuse to take in, be their establishment in the East or in the West. Once a provincial pawnbroker took in a pig, and thereby hangs a tale. It was only a small pig, but "uncle," knowing its owner, advanced him 4s. on the beast. Four months elapsed, and the customer claimed his pledge—the animal had grown to twice its original size—proferring the original loan with interest, but resolutely refusing to pay a penny towards the hungry animal's keep. "Uncle" could only grin and bear it, but his bitter experience pointed a lesson for every other pawnbroker in the land.

It is no uncommon thing for pawnbrokers in the neighbourhood of the docks to have rare birds, monkeys, and other zoological specimens offered them as pledges by seafaring men. No matter how rare or how valuable these creatures may be, "uncle" invariably declines to lend money on live stock.

It is only a few months since a dishonest Lancashire servant girl, who had been left in charge of her employer's house while the family was away at the seaside, did her level best to raise money on her mistress' pet Persian cat—an intelligent animal and one that had won many prizes. The girl, it is said, offered the "tom" to every pawnbroker in the district, but the pledge was

always politely but positively declined.

In a certain West of England town, a youth was charged recently with poisoning a valuable dog, the property of his employer. In the course of the hearing it was proved beyond a doubt that the foolish fellow had endeavoured to pawn the animal at no fewer than seven "shops." Frustrated in his desire, he had vented his spleen upon the unfortunate creature.

In certain districts in London, at any rate, it is exceedingly difficult, if not quite impossible, to pawn books. "Uncle" will lend no more on a rare and really valuable tome than on a bound-up volume of a penny weekly. In either case his highest offer will probably be but a few pence. One pawnbroker told the writer that a family Bible, almost as good as on that day when it had cost £7 or £8, might perhaps, with luck, bring its owner a couple of shillings. If, however, the volume happened to contain "family history" (in the shape of names), not one pawnbroker in a thousand would regard it for an instant

in the light of a possible pledge.

Dutch clocks, though they be really valuable, are "unpawnable," owing to their weights and chains, which render them more than ordinarily liable to get out of order. On the other hand, "grandfather's clocks," despite their size, are very easy to pledge. Speaking metaphorically, pawnbrokers "jump at them," and so much as £8 or even £10 can, on occasion, be borrowed on a fine specimen.

Glass table lamps, however costly, are "unpawnable" because they are so liable to breakage, and it is a remarkable fact that a brand-new silk hat, costing perhaps a guinea and a half, is an article on which no self-respecting pawnbroker would lend money. Take "uncle" your old opera hat, however, and he will probably offer to make you a small advance.

Many pawnbrokers, it seems, when considering how much they can lend upon an article, regard the transaction as though they were buying the pledge outright. Thus they have to consider the probable value of the goods to them in twelve months' time from that date. So it comes about that the most beautiful evening gowns are among the pledges that pawnbrokers refuse.

One of the biggest pawnbrokers in London told the writer that some years ago a well-known actress, happening to be in monetary difficulties, took him several magnificent evening frocks, made by Paquin and by Worth, no one of which can have cost less than one hundred guineas. "Although each had only been worn once, I should have been sorry to have lent her a sovereign on the lot," commented the pawnbroker.

Certain goods are quite "pawnable" in certain streets and districts, but are just as certain to be refused as pledges by pawnbrokers doing business in adjoining streets. To mention but one such case in London: Flat-irons are a very popular form of pledge in and around Gray's Inn Road, as are mattresses, blankets, bed-linen, and all the hundred-and-one smaller household "necessaries." But take the flat-iron (on which perhaps you may often have readily raised 3d. or 4d. hereabout), to a pawnbroker's round the corner in Holborn, "uncle" will look at you with grave surprise, and will inform you, as like as not, that he is sorry he cannot lend you quite a shilling on such a pledge, and that he never takes in anything for less than that amount.

Yet in some poorer neighbourhoods all the business done is in "lows"—the trade term for pledges under five shillings—and if it were possible to quote figures, it would probably be found that most of these "lows" refer to articles

pawned for fractions of a shilling.

In pawnbrokers' parlance a "medium" means a pledge worth between five shillings and ten shillings, and should you hear "uncle" jovially remark that he has that day "taken in over fifty auctions," you may infer that he wishes you to understand that he has lent sums of ten shillings and upwards on fifty different articles.

It is not generally known that many pawnbrokers, even in the poorest districts, refuse to transact business with men who come in barefooted and with female "customers" bare-armed or unprovided with a shawl. This rule holds good in every case, no matter what the nature of the proposed pledge.

Perhaps there has only lived one person from whom pawnbrokers, in her own neighbourhood, at any rate, would accept absolutely anything in pawn. This celebrity was only in humble life—the wife of a scene-shifter at Drury Lane—but for more years than one can say for certain she did the round of her "uncles" every Saturday night, redeeming from each goods of every description, and sometimes handing over the counter so many as forty or fifty tickets at one time. The woman acted on behalf of the minor lights and hangers-on at Drury Lane Theatre, and not a single instance is recorded of her having permitted any one of her numerous pledges to pass into the final possession of a pawnbroker.

THE COMMERCIAL'S MISTAKE.

A COMMERCIAL traveller, who has a fearful antipathy to co-operative stores, arrived home somewhat earlier than usual one afternoon, to find that the feminine portion of the household were out.

On going into the kitchen he found the kitchen table covered with goods from the local co-operative store. He, to teach his better-half a lesson, cleared the whole lot off on to the floor, and began to dance among them.

After mixing eggs, flour, tea, and sugar pretty well together, he looked round and found his wife beside him in tears.

"What are you doing, James?" she said.

"I'm teaching you a lesson never to go to the store again for your groceries."

"Oh, dear me," she said; "they are not ours, but the folks' next door. I took them in as they were out. Now you'll have to pay for them."

A green word thrown at your husband will go further towards a new hat than a rolling-pin will.

"BRIDGET," said Mrs. Hyde, "your lady friend mustn't stay so late hereafter. Her uproarious laughter woke me up at one o'clock this morning."

"Yes, mum; I was tellin' her about how you tried to make a cake wan day."

PROFESSOR STEELEYE: "By simply holding a bright object before a person's eyes for five minutes I can hypnotise him, and make him do anything I wish."

BOUTTOWN: "That's nothing. By holding a bright object before a restaurant waiter's eyes for three-quarters of a second, I can make him my absolute slave."

"THIS collar-button is my own invention," said the street hawker, "and the name I have given it is 'Fault.'"

"Because everybody has faults?" suggested the red-nosed man in the crowd.

"No, my dear sir, simply because it's so easy to find."

HOW ARE YOU OFF FOR "PHOS"?

Elixir of Life and Death as a "Summer Cooler."

"ORANGE or lemon phosphate." It is a familiar and a popular item on the tariff of the soda-fountain. On a hot day, in chemist's, "bun-shop," and restaurant, thousands of gallons of fruit-phosphate vanish down thirsty British throats.

Yet few know why the mixture is so excellent a pick-me-up, or why so many patent and widely-advertised drinks boast of their ability to supply our jaded beings with the very best brand of "phosphate," guaranteed to produce in us that buoyant brilliancy which insures success.

"Phosphate," or rather "the phosphates," since there are many, form a link in the singular scientific chain which constitutes a living, breathing man a near relative to a box of matches. For the chemical basis of phosphate is phosphorus, the extraordinary substance that renders the occupation of the match-maker such a dangerous one. Phosphorus, as is well known, is a deadly poison, and yet, astonishing as the fact may seem, it is also the foundation of all life. Without a proportion of phosphorus nothing could exist, from the lowliest microbe up to man himself.

Supposing an average man to weigh about ten stone, he has, though he may not suspect it, a good pound or more of phosphorus worked into his organisation, enough to tip millions of matches. And yet, if there were to be administered to him a bit of pure phosphorus no bigger than a match-head, he would die in agony.

This is where the phosphates come in. They are the form in which Nature serves up phosphorus to all living things. It is because wheat is so rich in them that civilised peoples, who need a great deal of phosphorus for their highly-developed brains and nervous systems, are such eaters of wheaten bread. And it is from the same reason that wheat is one of the most exhausting of all crops.

To put phosphorus into our exhausted soils Great Britain imports annually 300,000 or 400,000 tons of costly fertilisers. To put phosphorus into our exhausted systems more speedily and stimulatingly than by the roundabout natural means, we have invented the phosphorised pick-me-up—a variety of which is the fruit-phosphate of the now almost universal soda-fountain.

As to whether we have really succeeded, so far as the human body is concerned, in improving on Nature's methods, authorities disagree. Some say that phosphorus can only be taken up by the system from the foods in which Nature has herself packed it. That this is not the general opinion may be seen by the popularity of novel foodstuffs advertised as being artificially enriched with phosphates, and by the widespread use of phosphorised tonics.

Certain it is that if ever our modern scientists succeed in discovering the fabled elixir of life, some preparation of phosphorus will be its chief, possibly its single ingredient.

When phosphorus was first discovered, only some hundreds of years ago, the secret of its production was sold for a large sum, and great results were expected from it. But it has hardly, as yet, been of any marked utility, excepting in the manufacture of matches.

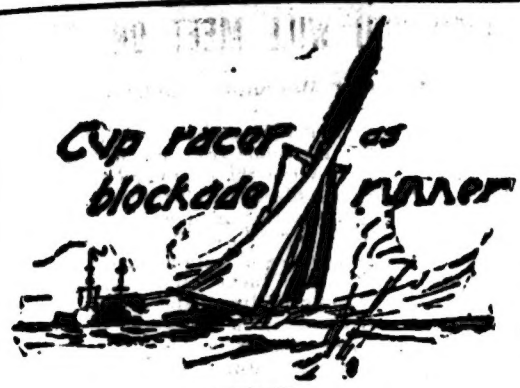
Science, however, is marching with giant strides. By the time electricity has displaced the last match-factory, our scientists may have ascertained why phosphorus is essential to all living tissue. And then we shall be on the high-road to compounding the magic draught of which the old philosophers dreamt.

In that far-distant future, phosphorus, as handled by the chemists of some more enlightened century, will probably be serving, not only to prolong the normal existence of a healthy person, but to increase his brain-power. For phosphorus is mysteriously connected with the strength and activity of the human mind, and when the mystery is solved by some daring experimenter, the development of mental ability will become largely a matter of diet.

Then, too, no doubt, we—that is to say, our descendants—will cease to speak of a recognised wit as "brilliant." He will be merely "phosphoric."

MONEY FOR THE ASKING

is what we should all like, but unfortunately Fate has willed it otherwise, and we have to work for the necessities of life. Some seem to succeed better than others. In certain cases it may be attributed to luck, but ordinarily it is hard work that wins the day. A congenial task is always easier to perform than one which is otherwise, and is likely to be more profitable. Everyone is not suited to the same kind of work, and in order to make the most of life, it is necessary that one should know what it is best to do. Such information as this can be gained by having one's character told. If you would like to receive an accurate delineation of your character you should send a specimen of your handwriting, together with six penny stamps and a stamped, addressed envelope, to EAREE, 32 Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C. A careful study of the delineation you receive will prove of great benefit.



Curious Fates of Famous Fliers.

The *Madeleine* is Used for Carrying Cocoanuts.

And the *Grayling* was Beached and Set on Fire.

It is fifty-two years this summer since the famous *America* crossed the Atlantic and bore away from our shores the hundred-guinea cup, the attempt to regain which has cost our yachtsmen hundreds of thousands of pounds.

And so little improvement has been made on that famous craft that until she was broken up quite recently she could do between twelve and thirteen knots an hour against the possible fourteen of a modern cup racer.

Few vessels ever built have had a more romantic history than the *America*. After winning the cup, which bears her name, she did not again return across the Atlantic, but was purchased by Lord de Blaquière at the very cheap price of £1,000.

He had her strengthened with stays inside her frame. Whether for this reason or because of some change of rig, she lost her amazing speed, and in the following summer was signally beaten by the very craft she had left so far behind in the August before. Then her owner issued a challenge to race any foreign yacht, and she met and

defeated the Swedish schooner "Sverige."

Lord de Blaquière then sold her to Lord Templeton, but he merely used her as a cruiser, and afterwards she lay on the mud at Cowes for years, and eventually passed into the hands of a shipwright named Pilcher, who bought her for a song, took her to Gravesend, and refitted her.

He sold her to a Mr. Decie, who altered her rig and rechristened her by the name of *Camilla*. She then won a big race off Plymouth, after which her owner took her for a cruise to the West Indies.

For a third time she crossed the Atlantic back to England, and again in 1860 changed hands and name and was fitted as a blockade runner for the American Civil War.

Then began the most exciting period of her career. Under the name of *Memphis*, she passed right under the guns of the Federal fleet into Mobile, Alabama, and achieved this feat not once, but several times. Then she was detected and chased by the warship *Wabash*, and to escape capture was scuttled and sunk in the mouth of the St. John's River, Florida.

But this was not the end of her.

When in 1864 the war was over, the fine old schooner was raised by the American Government, and fitted as a practice ship for the naval cadets at the American naval academy of Annapolis.

Six years later, in 1870, Mr. James Ashbury challenged for the cup she had won, and the American Government permitted the twenty-year-old vessel to be refitted in order to help to defend her trophy. This was done at a cost of £5,000. In result, she came in fourth in a fleet of twenty-five starters, defeating, however, the British *Cambria*, which was the challenger. The winner of this race was the American schooner *Magic*.

The Government then sold the old racer at public auction. She was bought by General Butler for £1,000, and since that time has been used chiefly as a cruiser. She has a new modern stern, with long overhang, and her sail plan has been kept up to date. In several lengthy cruising races she has

beaten craft thirty years her junior.

Next to the *America*, no racing yacht ever made a bigger name for her builders and herself than the schooner *Madeleine*. She was built thirty-five years ago, in 1868, and at once became the favourite yacht of America. She was first rigged as a sloop, but afterwards changed to a schooner. In 1876 she was chosen by the New York Yacht Club to defend the Cup, which had been challenged for by the *Countess of Dufferin*, a Canadian craft. She beat her in two successive races.

The *Madeleine* was afterwards bought by Captain J. R. Lord, who used her for cruising for some years. Sailing in the West Indies, it occurred to him to carry a cargo of cocoanuts to Tampa, in Florida. The speculation proved so profitable a one that Captain Lord decided to continue the business.

He has therefore had the fine old yacht converted into a trader. She has been shortened fifteen feet, and her hull painted black. But even these disfigurements have not entirely robbed her of her saucy, rakish appearance.

One of the best races ever seen for the America Cup was that given by Sir Richard Sutton's *Genesta* in 1885. The *Puritan*, selected to defend the Cup, only beat her rival in the second race by a little over a minute, after one of the closest contests on record. The *Puritan* is still in existence, and doing good work as a cruiser. She has been altered to schooner rig, but is still very speedy.

Indeed, the majority of the racing yachts of from twenty to forty years ago are still in existence, doing duty as cruisers or in trade. The reason for this is that yachts of that date were built of wood, and therefore lasted indefinitely. Modern racing yachts are built of steel, tobin bronze, aluminium, or a combination of these various metals. The result is that fortunes have to be spent in keeping them free from corrosion and rust, and therefore as soon as they are out of date they are usually broken up.

Lord Dunraven's first two *Valkyries* both met with disaster, being sunk in collisions. The third, which was beaten for the America Cup by Mr. Iselin's *Defender* in 1895, but which won so many other races all round the British and French coasts, was broken up a little more than two years ago. She was sent to Greenock for that purpose, and given over to the dockyard breakers. *Defender*, however, the yacht which defeated her, is still in existence. Most of her time she spends hauled up high and dry and covered carefully from the weather, but she has twice been used in "tuning up" her successors

in the defence of the Cup.

Sir T. Lipton's *Shamrock I.* has also been doing good work of a similar kind. She has proved herself very nearly as fast as her successors. *Shamrock II.* has not been brought back to this country, but is still on the other side of the Atlantic.

Another point which militates against modern racing yachts imitating their predecessors in being turned into cruisers or trading vessels is the extreme narrowness of their accommodation below deck. They can hardly find room for their crews even, and, when they are in racing condition, most of the men sleep and live aboard the tender, which always accompanies such a yacht as one of the *Shamrocks*. Everything is sacrificed to speed.

Few famous yachts have ever had so dramatic a life-ending as the old *Grayling*, built in 1882 for Mr. L. A. Fish. Her reputation became international, for, among other trophies, she twice won the famous Goelet Cup.

Within one month of her launching she capsized during a race, but not a single life was lost. Becoming old and losing her speed, her owner determined that his once great racer should not pass into other hands or to baser uses. He had her beached in front of his house, took everything of value out of her, and then set fire to her.

WANTED.

I'd like to read a joke about
  A woman who can cook;
Or meet a man who owned right out
  He could not write a book.

I'd like to see the villain who
  With rage turned aught but white;
I fain would meet a poet too—
  A poet who could fight.

I'd like to meet some ma-in-law
  Loved by her daughter's spouse;
A tramp who just delights to saw,
  Or a girl who loves a mouse.

Such prodigies as this I fear
  Can never, never be;
But, if they ever should appear,
  "May I be there to see."

"What did papa say when you asked him for my hand?" she asked.

"We'd better not discuss that subject," he returned; "I fear it would pain you to think that your father could use such language."

He: "Do you believe that there is such a thing as true, lasting love?"

She: "Possibly, but I sometimes doubt it."

He: "Well, there's Mr. and Mrs. Guessing, for example. They have been married ten years, and they seem to never want to lose sight of each other. Doesn't that look true and lasting love?"

She: "It may be that; but it looks to me more like true and lasting jealousy."

HUSBAND-HUNTING WITH FIREWORKS.

Portraits in Hats and Messages in Cigars.

The pretty daughter of a west-country squire, who had long been kept jealously secluded from male society by a selfish mother, hit the other day upon an ingenious method of securing a husband.

A local jubilation was in progress, and at night rockets were sent up from the grounds of the house wherein the young lady was, to all intents and purposes, a prisoner. To one of the sticks she attached a tiny slip of cardboard, upon which was written her name and address, and a short statement of her lonely and loveless plight.

By a stroke of that sheer good luck which, even in these prosaic days, does occasionally befriend damsels in distress, the message fell into the hands of the only son of a neighbouring landowner.

His curiosity was first aroused; then his pity; lastly, his love. And now, after many negotiations, and much wagging of lawyers' heads and prating of parents' tongues, it is arranged that the pair are to be married in the autumn.

Not long since there lived in Liverpool a widower, forty years of age, and lonely. By occupation he was a warehouseman, and one day, while engaged in unpacking a consignment of Canadian eggs, he came across one with this inscription: "Packed by Mrs. Meade, a lonely widow, aged thirty, at Meade's Farm, Belleview, Manitoba."

After some brief deliberation he wrote to the address given, stating full particulars concerning himself, inclosing his photograph, and suggesting the possibility of marriage. Three weeks later a cablegram was handed in at his door. It proved to consist of but a single word—"Come." He went. And neither is lonely now.

When, some few years back, the tiny "gem" portraits were first introduced, an enterprising Manchester mill girl discerned in them a new aid to husband-hunting. She was a hat-finisher, and inside a number of "bowlers" that passed through her hands she gummed, hidden between the lining and the felt, a "gem" photograph of herself, together with her name and address.

Most of these, probably, remained undiscovered. But one, at all events, did not. It was found by a young Dalston cabinet-maker, and a wedding followed the finding. The ceremony was celebrated at Guide Bridge, near Manchester, and was fully reported in the local Press.

Similar merchandise-borne messages, too, are not infrequently sent out by the girls who are employed in such large numbers in the Cuban cigar factories. One such was found by a member of one of the most exclusive West End clubs the other night, and caused quite a flutter of mild curiosity in the usually dully decorous smoke-room.

A small needle had been placed in the cigar, and to this was attached, by a tiny thread, a thin strip of paper, on which was a note, in very good Spanish, addressed to the finder, and stating that the writer was young and beautiful, though poor.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that this particular shaft shot at random failed to hit the intended mark.

To an incurious and unimaginative man, especially if he be middle-aged, there is frequently something well-nigh repulsive in a young woman advertising herself broadcast after this fashion. But then all men are not incurious, neither are all men unimaginative or middle-aged; and romantic youth is apt to be deeply impressed with a message dropped from the clouds, as it were, at its feet.

The writer once personally witnessed an incident bearing out the truth of this. All the way from Chicago came a name and an address in a box of American sweetmeats. The writer thereof was a work-girl, a packer in a wholesale confectionery firm; the recipient was a rising journalist of twenty-three.

A correspondence began. A little later he journeyed four thousand miles to speak with her. And in the end he married her.

A well-known scientist told recently how he became acquainted with his wife through discovering her name and address on a penny. It had been scratched there by the lady in microscopic characters to test the doctrine of chances, and had been in circulation for over three years, passing, of course, through many hundreds of hands, ere attracting his attention.

But perhaps the most curious instance in point was one which set the wedding bells ringing in Peckham early this Spring. A young lady assistant in a music shop had conceived an affection for one of the customers, an unengaged man in a fairly good position, and, like many another girl similarly situated, was at a loss to let him know her feelings towards him.

At last, however, a happy thought struck her. The object of her regard came frequently to the place to exchange and purchase phonograph records. She had one prepared specially for his benefit, speaking into it herself her hopes and fears. This she substituted for the ordinary stock article—and the result was as stated above.

Lady readers will find useful hints as to the renovation of their clothes in the August LADY'S MAGAZINE.

Light Means Hair.

Like most vegetation, the hair grows better in light than in darkness, because of the stimulating effect of light and sunshine. It has often been noticed in the case of men who sit in offices with one side always turned towards the light that the moustache or beard of that side grows longer than that on the other.

An Expensive Pet.

A pet goat at Heidelberg chewed up a portion of its owner's overcoat, together with £100 in bank notes.

After Twenty-nine Years.

A legacy of £70 left to a poor woman of Truboe, St. Germans, by her mother twenty-nine years ago, was recently discovered in a feather mattress.

Windows Made of Oyster-Shells.

In Manila most of the houses and offices have window panes made of translucent oyster-shells instead of glass. An average window, 6ft. high by 4ft. wide, contains 260 shell-panes, which temper the heat and light of the sun, and prevent blindness.

The Exception.

A school teacher had a great deal of trouble in making a boy understand his lessons, and, when he finally succeeded, he drew a long breath and said: "What a tiresome boy you are. If it wasn't for me, you'd be the biggest donkey in the town."

Slept Out His Time.

A doctor in Montana who was sent to prison for twenty-one days promptly hypnotised himself and went to sleep. All efforts to awaken him failed, and by this time he has probably completed his twenty-one days with little discomfort to himself.

Professional Jurymen.

Since coroners' jurors are paid in Melbourne, professional jurymen have come into existence, chiefly Government pensioners of the lower grades. These read the papers diligently, and are always on hand at ten in the morning at the Morgue after any fatality.

Automatic Gambler.

A penny-in-the-slot machine, which shot the penny into one of seven compartments by which the speculator either lost his penny, had it returned, or got a cigarette as his luck or skill dictated, has been condemned as illegal, on account of having too much of a lottery nature.

George Washington's Hatchet.

The hatchet used by George Washington when he chopped down the cherry tree has been discovered by some workmen in the ancient house in which George's mother lived. It seems to have been of the toy variety, and is stated to be covered with rust.

Didn't Mind It a Bit.

A gallant military man, who lost a leg in the South African troubles, was knocked down and run over by a cab in London recently. He astonished the crowd by getting up and walking off with a slight limp. It was the cork leg which the wheel had gone over.

The Burglars Fled.

Half a dozen burglars, while on business intent in a funeral undertaker's premises recently, were scared nearly out of their wits by seeing a body rise from one of the coffins on a shelf. They fled. The body was that of a watchman on the premises who had been having forty winks.

To Comfort Lady Customers.

Civilisation develops the nerves, and in a fashionable district of New York the ladies' special shops have all a distinct room for clients who have a tendency to faint. Green decorations soothe the eyes of the faint-hearts, and the most delicious of perfumes keep their senses attracted to the things of earth. The luxurious sofas are meant to make you forget dull care, and it seems as if even the poorest nerves would cease to trouble in such a climate.

How Birds Drink at Sea.

The means by which sea birds quench their thirst when far out at sea is described by an old skipper, who tells how he has seen birds at sea, far away from any land that could furnish them with water, hovering around and under a storm cloud, chattering like ducks on a hot day at a pond, and drinking in the drops of rain as they fell. They will smell a rain squall a hundred miles distant, or even further off, and scud for it with almost inconceivable swiftness.

Enemy as Foster-Mother.

During recent threshing operations at a farm at Hartleton, near Ross, a nest of young rats was found in a rick. Several of them were taken into the house, and, as an experiment, were put with a cat, whose kittens, with the exception of one, had just been taken away from her. The cat commenced to suckle the young rodents, and continued doing so for a space of five or six days, after which another cat, noticing them, quickly put an end to their existence.

A Dangerous Drink.

The habit of ether drinking is extremely prevalent in some parts of Russia, as of East Prussia, and all the efforts of the authorities to combat the evil have hitherto been almost fruitless. Ether is drunk by farmers on festive occasions, when it appears to be consumed in pailfuls. A farmer at Trosmo, celebrating his son's wedding, recently got in two pails of ether. During the process of decanting the ether into bottles, a violent explosion took place, by which six children were killed and several seriously injured.

The Box was too Small.

A witness at Shoreditch County Court recently was too stout to be got into the witness-box.

Money-making Faces.

Pretty girls in America are said to be "letting out" their faces to photographers for the purpose of commercial advertisements.

Rats were Responsible.

A Lerwick bankrupt, explaining why he could not draw up a statement of his affairs, said that rats had eaten his cash-book and receipts.

A Poor Catch.

Herrings were so scarce off the east coast one week recently, owing to the absence of wind, that a Yarmouth boat returned with four as the only result of a night's work.

Stair-Climbing Competition.

A stair-climbing competition is being organised by a Paris sporting paper. Competitors will have to climb up no fewer than 266 steps, those leading to the top of Montmartre Hill.

City Sinking into the Sea.

The consulting engineer of the city of Boston (U.S.A.) is reported to be of the opinion that the city is sinking steadily into the sea, and that a large area is menaced with ultimate submersion.

War Against Gamblers.

Four of the leading Atlantic shipping companies, it is said, are considering the advisability of employing detectives on their ships in order to wage war on the increasing number of gamblers who frequent liners.

Waitress Wins Shooting Prize.

At a shooting match in the Canton of Grisons, Switzerland, a young waitress laughed at one of the competitors, who challenged her to do better if she could. Accepting, she thereupon took up a rifle and succeeded in winning a prize.

Insignificant Man.

At a recent meeting of the Housewives' Union of South Chicago, a series of rules for the regulation of husbands was drawn up. One of these permits the latter to visit their clubs once a week. An anniversary celebration of woman's emancipation is being planned for next year.

Bad Boy's Good Work.

Five youthful prisoners escaped last week from the Provincial Reformatory of British Columbia at Vancouver. A boy named Emory, a noted bad character, informed the superintendent that, if set at liberty, he would find and bring them back. He was let out, and returned the same evening with the fugitives.

Music Kills Mosquitoes.

In Brookline, Massachusetts, experiments are being made with a novel method of destroying mosquitoes by means of musical notes. It is asserted that a certain number of musical vibrations will cause these pests to become suddenly paralysed, whereupon they fall from the ceiling or wall, and can then be dealt with.

Penny-in-the-Slot Prescriptions.

The latest invention from Paris is a slot-machine to bear the names of every malady, from a cold in the head to measles and lumbago. You put your money in the slot beneath the name of the disease you wish to cure, and, as it falls down, out rolls a little packet with a prescription neatly typewritten, and a microscopic dose to be taken.

New Cure for Nerves.

The latest cure for nervous diseases, according to a Swiss doctor, is tea made with melted snow. The snow ought to be first melted and the water then boiled. The taste of tea thus made is insipid and slightly disagreeable, but it is said to have a very soothing effect upon the nerves, and in many cases nervous people have been cured when all other remedies had failed.

Prize for Window-breaking.

An enterprising Newchurch grocer, whose shop is near the local cricket ground, recently offered a Dutch cheese as a prize to the batsman who could drive a ball through his shop window. The cheese has been won by Lieutenant Dunne, of the Littlestone C.C., whose "winning hit" splintered the glass into tiny fragments, knocked over half a dozen bottles of sweets, and smashed a few treacle jars.

150 Cyclists "Bagged."

The Cheshire police had a haul of 150 cyclists at Cheadle on a recent Sunday evening. At the top of a hill sat a benevolent-looking gentleman, who appeared to be taking his rest by the wayside. As each cyclist passed, he timed the rider over 200 yards on the downhill course. A lad who was with him signalled with a handkerchief to a posse of police in hiding round the bend of the hill.

Narcotic Shoes.

A shoe repairer was recently mending a pair of shoes which belonged to a young lady. While he was mending them an unaccountable drowsiness took hold of him, and, after several suspensions of work, ended by sending him to sleep. Inquiries brought to light the fact that the mishap was caused by the shoes he was mending. The owner was employed in a scent factory, and it is thought that the shoes harboured some powerful essence. Thus, when the shoemaker hammered the leather, he disturbed the scented dust that had collected between the soles and sent himself to sleep.

Balloon Garden Parties.

Balloon garden parties are the latest contrivance of high society in Paris for killing time. The idea is the outcome of personal predilection, and, appropriately enough, emanates from balloonists and fashion leaders so unimpeachable as the Duc and Duchesse d'Uzès, who the other day invited a party of guests to a garden party luncheon in the Aero Club Park, and whiled away the afternoon with a couple of airship ascents, in which the aeronauts were dukes and counts, and the "passengers" were lords and ladies of equally high degree. But everybody voted the novelty a tremendous success, and it is likely to be perpetuated.

MEN YOU WILL MEET ON MONDAY.

Types of Masculine Holiday-makers.

The first question that a girl is asked by her bosom friends on returning home from her holiday is one of this character: "Were there any really nice fellows staying at the same place?" (It is the custom for girls to refer to all unmarried men whose age is between eighteen and fifty as "fellows.")

There are many types of holiday young men, and no one writer could do them all justice, but we will endeavour to briefly outline half a dozen or so types which are well known to most people who have spent a holiday at a seaside pleasure resort.

Such young men are always there; they were there when our fathers were boys, and they will probably be there when our sons are men. Of course, the modes and fashions of the day affect the types in various ways, but at heart the types are the same.

There is the petted young man, who tells all the ladies, young and old alike, of all his difficulties and trials. He is usually what is termed "a mother's boy"—that is, one who was spoilt in early life by being pampered, and generally given way to.

He is, to give him his due, usually very polite. On the other hand, he is exceedingly egotistical, and he talks about his likes and dislikes as if they were really important matters.

At table he expects to get the very cut from the joint that he has previously explained he likes best.

There is the shy man, who carefully avoids the young ladies. He blushes and acts awkwardly, and, if spoken to, he stammers or says what he did not intend to say.

As a rule the buttons of his waistcoat are in perfect order, yet he is for ever fidgeting with them when he is in the drawing-room or waiting in the hall for any purpose.

The other men in the place do their best to make him forget his failing and to "bring him out," but their efforts are seldom successful. He is to be pitied for his shyness, because it is clear that it causes him real mental pain, and it is also beyond dispute that it makes other people feel uncomfortable.

There is the flirty young man, who forms a very striking contrast to the petted variety. The flirty one takes it for granted that one and all of the ladies will be glad to talk with him. He has a knack of introducing himself by performing some slight service, if he is for any reason unable to obtain a formal introduction.

He is, generally speaking, a fairly intellectual sort of man, and he is prepared to chat smoothly on most subjects likely to be raised by the fair ones to whom he pays attention.

He has a strong tendency to attract himself to a girl who is good looking, and who knows how to dress becomingly. By this it is evident that he loves the reflected glory that such a companion confers on him.

There is the amateur actor young man. He is largely on the increase nowadays. He poses as an authority on acting, and he is ready, or, rather, eager, to tell all he knows about Sir Henry Irving, Mr. Tree, Mr. Alexander, and a whole multitude of actresses.

He sometimes goes so far as to claim acquaintance with some of the stage celebrities, and he whispers little bits of strictly confidential information concerning one or other of our leading players.

He tells everybody in the boarding-house all about the next week's company that is billed to play at the local theatre, and he resents having his opinion of any particular play differed from. He is intending to take to the professional stage himself "some day," but hitherto there have been quite a number of good (more or less) reasons for his not having done so.

He allows his hair to grow rather long, and he says "gel" when he means "girl" and "feegure" when he means "figure." He is always ready to recite should anyone in the company desire or suggest it.

There is the business young man, who cannot for the life of him put "shop" away from his thoughts and speech for more than an hour or two at a stretch. He is, perhaps, a draper, or a grocer, or a chemist; no matter what he is, he is constantly dragging in something about his calling.

The long hours, or the small profits, or the want of co-operation in his line, are themes that he will eloquently enlarge upon for half days together. He usually has to find a new companion every other day, for the ordinary Britisher cannot bear to be talked to for long on a subject that he has not at heart.

There is the dressy young man, who reminds one very forcibly of the quick-change artist. He appears in flannel trousers and a Norfolk jacket before breakfast for an hour or so, while at the breakfast table he is arrayed wholly in flannels.

Some time during the forenoon he slips off to his bedroom, and he emerges dressed in a plain blue serge suit and a yachting cap, which he wears till towards afternoon tea-time. For that meal, however, he turns up in grey trousers and a striped cloth jacket and vest, and his coloured shirt has given place to a white one.

It is at dusk that his next change takes place; then he resumes the plain blue serge suit, with the addition of a long dust coat. He seems to "fancy" himself in all his different costumes, and there is about his expression a hint of pity and contempt for the man who keeps himself incased within one suit the whole of the day.

A seasonable article in the August PEARSON'S is "The Life Story of a Red Grouse."

The Wit and Oddity of Business Announcements.

A Photographer Undertook to Remove Teeth.

And the War Office Issued a very Curious Notice.

THE tradesman who recently advertised in a provincial paper that he sold, among a host of other things, "pigs, pens, pistols, and parasols, fiddle-strings and flour, and all kinds of hardware except treacle and trousers," and wound up with the significant announcement that "being now a widower all orders will in future be punctually attended to," no doubt imagined himself to be blessed with a gift of humour.

And so perhaps he was, of a sort; although most people will probably say that the

"FURNITURE REMOVING À LA CARTE,"

which was to be seen up to within a few weeks back in a Fulham greengrocer's window, constituted a far better example of genuine wit.

Everyone is doubtless by this time aware that there is trouble at Bethesda between Lord Penrhyn and his quarrymen, but the fact hardly justified the practical joker who, probably for the delectation of strangers, posted up in the neighbourhood a direction-board on which was inscribed in big bold letters:

"THIS WAY TO THE QUARRELS."

Sometimes this particular brand of humour is of the unconscious kind; as, for example, in the case of a notice that appeared at either end of a certain suburban thoroughfare which happened to be "up" at the time.

"BEWHERE THE STEAM ROLLER IS WORKING,"

was the startling message it blazoned abroad to all and sundry.

Very funny is the following advertisement, reproduced as a genuine trade announcement in a recent number of a photographic paper. "Marvellous results in photos!" it read. "Hair put on bald heads, cute dimples inserted in cheeks, teeth removed if necessary, thin people made stout, scowls removed from sombre faces and winning smiles substituted, ugliness banished, intelligence inserted in vacuous countenances, goo-goo eyes, longing looks, and the baby stare furnished if desired. Classic profiles, Grecian noses, and flashing eyes a speciality."

It was a West End tailor named Knott whose appeal for custom took the following form:

"MANY TAILORS ARE EXTORTIONATE IN THEIR CHARGES; I AM KNOTT."

Even more extraordinary was the notice that emanated some time back from the shop of a certain East End tailor. It was couched throughout in the language of the slums, and was doubtless intended to attract custom by inducing merriment, and so getting the establishment talked about.

The proprietor described himself as "the champion slap-up tog and kickses builder of Whitechapel," and as the originator of the "now widely-copied Upper Benjamins."

"These," the circular continued, "we build on a new and downy plan, at prices ranging from a finnuff to half a thick 'un. Pair of constitution cords, built hanky-spanky, with a double fakement down the sides, and artful buttons at the bottom, from five and a tanner to eleven bob. Sneaking or lounging togs, any price yer like. Fancy doeskins, half a canary and upwards. Caps to fit all sorts of naps.—N.B. No allowance made to seedy swells, shallow coves, or flunkeys out of collar."

In Islington, not long since, there was a cycle-repairer's establishment, run by a man named Dunn, over the door of which appeared the following:

"WHAT IS DONE IS DONE; BUT IT'S NOT WELL DONE UNLESS IT'S DONE BY DUNN."

In the South of London recently a coterie of convivially-inclined individuals decided to found a small society of their own, on the lines of the Buffaloes, Oddfellows, and other similar clubs, and a committee was appointed to draw up a code of rules. One of these, after having been approved and printed, read thus: "Any member entering the lodge room when the Worthy Chief is in the chair drunk shall be fined five shillings."

Canvassers, and others of that ilk, are undoubtedly something of a nuisance to busy City men, which is probably why the outer office of a firm of Broad-street merchants bears the legend, "Canvassers seen between 9 and 9.45 only." The intention of the author of this ambiguous notice was, doubtless, to limit these unwelcome callers to three-quarters of an hour in the early morning, but the announcement as it stands might also mean that they would be seen any time between nine in the morning and a quarter to ten at night.

Trade rivalry is not infrequently responsible for trade wit. Thus, a short while back, the business of the one little general shop in a remote Surrey village, kept by a man named Little, was encroached upon by a newcomer in the district who set up an opposition establishment.

Whereupon there appeared in the outraged tradesman's window the somewhat egotistical motto:

"MAN WANTS BUT LITTLE HERE BELOW;"

to which the other promptly retorted with:

"NOR WANTS THAT LITTLE LONG."

A similar story is told of a pair of opposition tobacconists, one of whom, named Farr, exhibited in his window a card on which was inscribed:

"The best tobacco by Farr."

To this his rival replied with another and larger card, bearing the words:

"Far better tobacco than the best tobacco by Farr."

The landlord of a wayside tavern in one of the home counties rejoices in the curiously inappropriate name of Isaac Drinkwater. He has, however, managed to turn it to good account in his business, for on the sign over the door there appears the following: "I Drinkwater, but my customers drink the best of ale, and that's Isaac Drinkwater's."

"OUR ONLY 'ORDERS' FOR DEADHEADS ARE—'GET OUT!'"

So runs the notice over the box-office of a minor provincial theatre. "Orders," it may be mentioned, mean, in the parlance of the "profession," free admission tickets.

Nearly opposite this same place of amusement is a billiard saloon, with, over the fireplace, the following: "*Gentlemen* are invited to use the rest, *others* must." Evidently the proprietor of this establishment is as careful to discriminate between his two classes of patrons, and to give to each the benefit, as was the Sussex farmer who politely intimated:

"Ladies and gentlemen are kindly asked not to pull up the turnips; other persons, if detected, will be prosecuted."

This, however, at all events, is easy to be understood; but what shall be said of the following?

"Ten shillings reward. Any person found trespassing on these lands or damaging these fences will receive, on conviction, the above reward."

Many curiously-worded notices have emanated from our much-criticised War Office, but nothing, it is to be presumed, to beat the following: "Whenever a soldier shall be placed on half-pay, or whenever a soldier on half-pay shall die, he shall be at once personally informed of the fact by the officer commanding his troop or company."

It was a corporal of engineers—or, at all events, so runs the legend in Chatham—who, having completed a not too substantial temporary bridge, posted up at either end of it this bewildering bit of English:

"No vehicle drawn by more than one animal is allowed to cross this structure in opposite directions at the same time."

"Reding and wrighting taut hear," was to be seen until quite recently scrawled in chalk upon a cottage door in a certain Wiltshire village. A stranger pointed out to the occupier, an ancient dame, that 'and" was the only word in the entire sentence which was spelt correctly. "Well," was the logical but unconvincing reply, "I don't undertake to teach spelling; do I?"

Another country village displayed prominently the following: "A da skool kep, terms 2 and 3 pens per week for reeding and nitting and righting and sowing."

It was a retired Hornsey tradesman who, anxious for the safety of the plants in his front garden, and aware that spring-guns and man-traps were unlawful, stuck up the following over his front gate:

"Flower stealers and trespassers beware; Scolopendriums and Polypodiums are set here."

Another eccentric placed in a field on his estate a board with the following "generous" offer painted thereon: "I will give this field to any man who is contented." It was but a very little while before an applicant put in an appearance.

"Well, my man, are you a contented fellow?" queried the landowner.

"Yes, sir, very."

"Then why do you want my field?"

DUTIES POLICEMEN DETEST.

They Dislike Nothing More than Handling an Intoxicated Woman.

DIFFERENT men have, of course, different likes and dislikes, but policemen are agreed that one of their most objectionable duties is that of conducting Mrs. Chronic-tippler to the police-station.

To tackle an inebriated man, be he ever so maudlin or violent, is a delightful task compared with the occupation of managing an intoxicated woman, who will often destroy her captor's last vestige of self-respect by making desperate love to him before a crowd of scoffers.

A man can always be got to a police-station, either dragged, driven, or frogsmarched, and a little rough handling is no more than he deserves, and generally has a good effect. But a policeman cannot rough-handle a woman; at the slightest threat of such action she throws herself on the ground, screaming like a maniac and kicking like a donkey-engine. And she has to be lugged to her feet, and practically carried to the station sobbing hysterically, at the brutal treatment to which she has been subjected, between vague snatches of music-hall ditties.

Suddenly she will swing round unsteadily and land herself and her captor—his equilibrium suddenly destroyed by relief from her weight—in the mud, whereat the crowd roars. Or she will turn upon him, knock his helmet under the wheels of a passing vehicle, and scratch his face, all of which he must suffer without his temper being ruffled.

Another painful duty, but painful for higher reasons, which policemen detest is assisting in executions upon the goods of poor people, and helping in evictions. Policemen have in sheer disgust at this duty even left the force when it has offered them good prospects, while the writer knows personally of cases where policemen have paid out of their own pockets small sums of money rather than go with the brokers to assist in an execution for the money. Other men have been "reduced," and even dismissed, for unlawfully siding with poor people against arrogant and abusive brokers.

It is a fact that a young sergeant who was once sent to assist in a distraint for debt, not only himself paid the debt, but gave the broker a thrashing because of the insults he heaped upon his victims, and, as a consequence, he had to leave the force, although every man of his division was proud of him for his illegal conduct.

Every now and then policemen doing duty in the neighbourhood of the Docks are relieved by men drafted in from other divisions. This is a great grievance, and so strong is the dislike of being sent to do duty near the Docks, that policemen not infrequently leave the force rather than go.

The immediate neighbourhood of the Docks is, of course, the roughest and most dangerous in the whole country. It is a monument to the courage of the police that this neighbourhood is patrolled at all, especially as the uniform a policeman wears acts like a rasp on the nerves of these wild beasts. Were it not for the fear of retribution which alone dominates these people, twenty-four hours would more than suffice for the police about the Docks to be wiped out.

Despite the extra pay, policemen strongly dislike racecourse duty—that is, going to the various race meetings to control the crowds and see that order is maintained.

On ordinary duty a policeman puts in about eight hours a day, with a good interval between each four hours. But when he goes to duty on a racecourse his day often exceeds twelve hours on a stretch, and the greater part of the time he is standing, standing, standing without bite or sup in the broiling sun or pouring rain, jostled by immense crowds, who, themselves on pleasure bent, fail to understand why he should be a "bit snappy" after eight or nine hours' basking without a drop of—lemonade, we'll say, to cool and cheer him.

To a man who has no interest in the racing, or is stationed where he sees only the unsensational flights, racecourse duty is so distasteful that he dislikes the summer season simply on that account, and wishes the Jockey Club, racecourses, and their companies in Uganda.

Strange though it appears, silent-boot duty—sometimes called the "ghost's walk"—is detested by most policemen, on whose nerves it often has a very bad effect.

Silent boots are, of course, worn to enable the men to parade the streets without their footfalls betraying their approach to evildoers, who may thus be caught red-handed. When silent boots were first introduced to the force, the men favoured them, but, after experience, they changed their opinion, the effect of walking endless streets in the darkness of night without the companionable sound of their own footfalls so working on their nerves that many of them were quickly unfitted for night duty altogether.

For this reason silent boots were not adopted for general use. Occasionally, when it is hoped they may be of good service, they are ordered to be used in individual cases, and "Robert" detests the "ghost's-walk."

The paper to combine with "P.W." for holiday reading is SHORT STORIES, one penny every Tuesday.

TOO PREVIOUS.

"MAY I," the young man began, with a quaver in his voice, "may I presume so far upon our short acquaintance as to ask you——"

"Please say no more," faltered the maiden. "I regret deeply to give you pain; but if I have inadvertently encouraged you to entertain hopes that can never be realised, I cannot forgive myself. Believe me, I am sincerely——"

"Pardon me," interrupted the youth, who had gasped once or twice and drawn his hand across his brow while she was speaking, "but I was only going to ask you for the loan of a penny for my omnibus fare; I was stupid enough to come away from home this evening without any money. Ah! thank you; I will return it without fail. Good-night."

"JACKSON has made a fortune in the motor-car business."

"I didn't know he manufactured that class of vehicles."

"He doesn't; he repairs them."

HE: "Why did you fail to recognise me in the street to-day?"

She: "I didn't see you."

He: "That's strange! I saw you twice."

She: "Oh, that probably accounts for it. I never notice a man in that condition."

MORE WONDERFUL.

ONE of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools for Scotland was examining a class in a school in Lanarkshire, and after he had taken several subjects he asked the teacher to give them a few questions in Nature knowledge.

The teacher puzzled her brain for a subject in which her children were likely to shine, and at length decided to take up that of "chickens."

"Now, children," she said, "I want you to tell me something very wonderful about chickens."

"How they get out of their shells," promptly responded one little fellow.

"Well," said the teacher, "that is, of course, wonderful; but I mean something more wonderful still."

There was a silence for a few seconds. Then a little boy held up his hand in token that he had an answer to give.

"Well, Johnnie?" queried the teacher.

"Please, ma'am," answered Johnny, "it's mair wonderful hoo they ever got intae their shells!"

WHEN some cavalrymen were going through a riding drill, one of the men's horses bolted with him, and was making his way towards the stables when an officer met him.

"Where are you going?" inquired the officer.

"I don't know, sir," shouted the cavalryman, as he flew past. "Ask the horse!"

THE new rector had scarce been installed a week before the young ladies of the sewing class petitioned him for permission to play lawn tennis on the rectory lawn.

The rector wrote back saying he was heartbroken at being obliged to refuse the first application they had made to him, but the rectory grounds were devoted to horticulture, and not to husbandry.

WHO PUT THE BUTTON IN?

"LAST Sunday," said the clergyman to his congregation, "someone put a button in the collection bag. I won't mention names. I will merely say that only one individual in the congregation could have done so, and I shall expect the same member, after the service, to replace the button with a coin of the realm."

After church a well-to-do, but close-fisted, individual sought an interview with the clergyman in the vestry. "I—er," he began hesitatingly, "must apologise, sir, for the—er—button incident, which, I can assure you, was quite an accident. I happened to have the button in my waistcoat pocket, together with a threepenny piece, and took out the former by mistake. However, sir, here is the threepence."

"Thank you," said the clergyman, taking the money and gravely handing him the button.

"By the bye, sir," said the man, "I cannot understand how you should have known that it was I who—er—committed the—er—much-to-be-regretted mistake."

"I didn't know," replied the clergyman.

"Didn't know! But you said that only one individual in the congregation could have done so."

"Just so. You see, sir, it is scarcely possible that two individuals could have put one button in the bag—is it, now?" asked the clergyman with a bland smile.

It was so much easier for the button contributor to say "Good-day" than to answer this puzzling question that he made his bow at once.

"THAT dog of yours does nothing but bark all night."

"So does yours."

"Yes, but I've got used to mine."

HE: "Here is a picture of my wife."

She: "Before or after taking?"

He: "What do you mean? Before or after taking what?"

She: "You."

YOUNG WIFE (dreamily): "How lovely it would be if all things in this world would work in harmony."

Husband (thoughtfully): "Oh, yes! For instance, if the price of coal would only go up and down with the thermometer."

KNEW HIS BUSINESS.

"Now, here is a showcase," said the commercial traveller, pointing to a peculiar-looking specimen of his wares, "that is bound to become popular. It magnifies everything put in it to double its natural size."

"Can't use it in my business," replied the prospective customer. "What I want is a case that will seemingly reduce the actual size of its contents."

"What is your line?" asked the dealer.

"My speciality is ladies' shoes," replied the other, with a half-suppressed grin.

HOW TO MAKE A FILTER.

A PERFECTLY satisfactory filter can be made at home at a trivial cost.

Buy first a large unglazed flower-pot with an uneven bottom. Put a cork in the hole, cover the bottom with a half inch layer of pebbles, a one inch layer of flint sand, and the same of animal charcoal.

Get a box from the grocer's and cut in it a hole sufficiently large to hold the pot, and place underneath a bowl or pitcher to catch the water that filters through. It will be found that the drops will fall from the slight bulge of the uneven bottom of the pot.

Before using the pebbles, sand, and charcoal, they should be boiled, and whenever the filter is cleaned, it would be well to repeat the boiling.

THE COST OF COURTSHIP.

THE following bill and letter have been received by a young man from the father of the girl whom he has been courting. The communication explains itself:—

June 27th, 1903.

Mr. John James Smith, Dr. to Hezekiah Bledgers—

	£	s.	d.
To three months' use of parlour, Thursday and Sunday evenings	3	0	0
To gas and coal used for comfort, at 1s. a night, which is very reasonable	1	6	0
To the old lady's trouble in keeping the children out of the parlour while you were with Maria	0	10	6
To broken rocking-chair—what I paid for it being mended	0	3	6
To suppers at various times	1	7	0
To springs and upholstering damaged on sofa, where Maria and you used to sit together—call it	0	15	0
Which adds up to	£7	2	6

Sir,—I want you to understand that if Maria, my daughter, has given you up, I haven't, and won't do so until you've paid for your pleasure. You can't come fooling round my house two nights a week an' using the parlour as if it were your own without paying for the luxury, and the bill I have made out is very reasonable. But that's neither here nor there, and what I have got to say is that you've got to pay for your fun. If you don't, I shan't set my lawyer on you or sue you in court, but I'll thrash the life out of you. You hear me?—Yours, HEZEKIAH BLEDGERS.

"You say Bliggins has gone in for writing verse?"

"Yes. Scared to death because he's getting bald, and heard that poets all had long hair."

"Do you," said the learned counsel, "swear that you will tell the truth, the whole truth, and——"

"Oh, how lovely," the fair witness interrupted; "shall I really be allowed to talk all the afternoon if I want to?"

MAUD: "But you must have given him encouragement, Nell."

Nell: "Why, my dear, how very foolish! Of course, I used to take walks with him almost every afternoon, and go to the theatre with him, and he came to dinner with us, and I went to church with him and danced with him very often, but I really never gave him any encouragement."

PLOUGHING THE WATER.

A CURIOUS method of producing platinum is reported to be practised by the inhabitants along the Tura River, in Tomsk, Siberia. They call it "ploughing the water."

A raft is constructed, and fastened to it is an inclined gutter of boards, which at its lower end is provided with an iron plough. While floating down the river they scrape or plough its bottom. The sand scraped out falls into the gutter, and passes into a tub filled with pine boughs, upon which platinum is deposited.

The sand of the Tura River and its tributaries is so rich in platinum that even this primitive production is profitable to the peasants.

"I WOULD kiss you if I dared," he said.

"If I were a man," she replied, with a determined air, "I think I would dare anything."

Just then a cloud passed over the moon.

MRS. CAUDLE: "Wake up, Jeremiah. I do believe there's a man in the room."

Caudle: "Yes, dear, and he's trying his best to get a few winks of sleep. Good-night."

CATCHING THE CRICKETER.

A WELL-KNOWN county cricketer visited a certain seaside resort with his team. Early on the third morning of the match he was taking a constitutional on the sands, when he was recognised by a group of youngsters who were engaged in playing cricket.

At their request he consented to bowl down a ball or two. He took several wickets in a very little time, after which the youngsters suggested that he should have his innings.

He agreed, and the game came to an abrupt conclusion, as he managed to break the bat in playing the very first ball he received. The youngsters looked very downhearted, but brightened up considerably on receipt of five shillings with which to buy a new bat.

Later in the day the gentleman chanced to refer to the incident. To his astonishment the other members of the team thought it very funny, and laughed.

"I can't see what there is to laugh about," he began.

"Well, you see," exclaimed the captain of the team, "we happen to know that bat. I broke it on Monday morning, George here broke it on Tuesday, and the smart youths have sold it you on Wednesday morning. They must have made a good sum out of that bat."

HE: "You appear to be angry with my friend from the west; but you mustn't mind what he says. He's a rough diamond, you know."

She: "Then I shall insist on cutting him."

NEWLY-MADE BRIDE: "Mamma says she does not think we will ever quarrel as she and papa do."

Groom: "Never, dearest."

Newly-made Bride: "No; she says you will be much easier to manage than papa was."

A WONDERFUL WOMAN.

"WONDERFUL, isn't it," said the cheerful soul, "how much more value a woman can get out of money than a man?"

"You mean," growled the cynic, "isn't it wonderful how much more money a woman can get out of a man than he can afford to let her have?"

"No, I don't. Take my wife, for instance. Last week I gave her five pounds for herself, and it bewildered me to see how much she did with it."

"I can't see how she could do anything with it besides spending it, unless she used it to establish her credit."

"Nonsense! To begin with, because she knew she had the money for her very own, she spent a couple of hours pleasantly in looking up all the theatrical news, to make up her mind which theatre she would rather go to. Then she spent a day in going the rounds of the leading millinery establishments to see all the new summer styles and decide what kind of a bonnet she would like. She next spent two whole days going through the shops looking at the bargains, feeling happy because she knew that if she really wanted anything she saw she had the money in her purse to buy it. Next she spent a day in some book shops, pricing a lot of fine editions that she had always wanted for the library, and after that she called at several florists' to have a look at the orchids and some new Japanese dwarf trees."

"But why don't you get to the point, and tell me which of all those things she bought?"

"She didn't squander a penny on any of them, but had just as much fun as if she had; for in the end she spent her money on necessary things that she had intended to buy all along."

The August LADY'S MAGAZINE contains its usual store of fiction and fashion.

STARTS TO-DAY. STARTS TO-DAY.

THE COST OF ANOTHER'S CRIME.

By NOWELL CAY.

CHAPTER ONE.

Friendless and Alone.

The Inglenook, Wendlesham, Suffolk.

DEAR MADAM,—Mr. Durnford wishes me to inform you that he has received your letter of yesterday's date, acquainting him with your father's death, your arrival in England, and your readiness to accept the invitation which he made you through your father some nine months ago. Mr. Durnford regrets that he accepted the decision made for you then as final, and is not in a position to repeat his invitation. He has adopted another young lady in your place, and feels that it would be unfair to her if he considered your proposal to visit him. Mr. Durnford is most anxious to act quite fairly, and if you have come to England relying upon the past invitation, will be pleased to pay your passage back to Melbourne. He has instructed me to call upon you and settle the matter, and I hope to reach your hotel shortly after your receipt of this letter.—I am, dear Madam, yours faithfully,

"ELI CURZON (Private Secretary)."

Madeline Veryan stared a little blankly at the formal letter which one of the hotel servants had brought up to her modest sitting-room.

She had reached London three days ago, feeling, after her seven years' absence, very much of a stranger. Such few relatives of her father's as she had left there when Mr. Veryan decided to start life afresh in a new country had died in the interval. The only one with any wealth had left it to a hospital. The trifling assets of the others had served to support her father during the last few years of his life, leaving sufficient over to bring Madeline to London with a few pounds in her pocket.

Her mother's people had quarrelled with Mrs. Veryan when she married, and, with the exception of her cousin, John Durnford, who had wished to marry her himself, had ignored completely the existence of her daughter. And John Durnford, after offering to adopt her when her father could not spare her, refused, as his letter showed, to give her a home when she needed it. She had counted quite confidently upon his offer being still open, and his refusal even to see her left her mentally stunned by the sharpness of the shock.

"If Viva would only write," she said aloud, and was half inclined to call the servant back. This surely could not be the only letter that the post had brought her.

Lady Alverdale, whom Madeline had known in her school-days as Viva Leyth, was the only one of her school-friends with whom she had kept up a correspondence. For school-girl friendships, although they are so ardent while they last, are, like most too-ardent passions, short-lived.

Of the dozen or so girls to whom Madeline had written seven years ago announcing her arrival in Melbourne, Viva was the only one whose interest in her had survived the first year of separation. But it seemed to Madeline that the love which they bore each other was founded upon something far stronger than mere youthful impulse.

They had been drawn and held together by the very difference of their natures, a difference which made each the complement of the other.

Viva, with her passionate, emotional temperament, her sylph-like figure that seemed always as light, as airy, and as restless as the wind, her little mobile face with its big, passionate, dark eyes, inherited from a Spanish ancestress, her waywardness and wilful disregard of consequences, her ever-changing moods, had stood to her more placid and self-controlled friend for the embodiment of charm, and she could never understand why she herself was more popular than her friend.

The persistence with which Viva managed to estrange the other girls and rouse the hostility of her mistresses made her assume the place of a protector and gave play to her strong maternal instinct.

It was to Madeline's gentle remonstrance alone that Viva would listen when she was angry, to Madeline alone that she would admit her repentance when the storm of jealous passion had passed. For in Madeline she found always a shield, an unfailing friend, a trusty confidante, all the stability that her own character did not know.

And although Madeline was actually the younger of the two girls, her protective attitude appeared the more natural because she was almost double Viva's size. She was built in that generous mould which requires time for its development. At eighteen, when she left England, she had been awkward and, except for her beautiful soft blue eyes, almost plain.

Even now, at twenty-five, although nobody could have denied that she was a handsome and beautiful woman, there was a suggestion both in face and figure that her beauty had not yet reached its full perfection.

The relationship between the two girls had remained very little changed by their separation. To Madeline, living a hard and solitary life of self-sacrifice with her father, Viva's vivacious letters, describing social triumphs, brought the only breath of romance, and Viva still needed her sympathy, her gentle admonitions and advice.

Her letters had been rare perhaps in the year that she met and married Viscount Alverdale, but when the first absorbing happiness of her courtship and early wedded days had passed, Madeline's unfailing sympathy was more in request than ever.

Lady Alverdale complained that her husband's love was already cooling, that he neglected her, and paid greater attention to other women. Madeline admonished her gently against her besetting sin of jealousy, and comforted her with the assurance that the first child would bring husband and wife closer together again.

But when Viva's little girl was born her complaints only redoubled. Her husband tried to win the baby's affection away from her. Then, as little Dolores grew, her mother complained that Vincent doubted her ability to train her own child, and insisted on engaging a nursery governess against her wish. And each governess who came and went invariably took her husband's part, and helped to turn little Dolores' affection away from her.

Madeline's heart ached often as she saw through her friend's eyes the failure of a marriage that had promised so well. Resentment grew in her heart against the man who had won the inestimable treasure of Viva's love only to prove himself unworthy of the honour.

Once, when Viva had tortured her by making a vague suggestion of suicide, she had been goaded to the extreme measure of writing to Lord Alverdale, remonstrating with him. She still had the curt reply in which his lordship advised her not to interfere in a matter on which she had heard only one side.

"If you were only here to support and advise me, dear Madeline," Lady Alverdale had written again and again, but now that Madeline was able and anxious to answer the wish, her friend had neither met her at the docks, as she had fondly expected her to do, nor answered the letter announcing her arrival.

She started as a step sounded outside. Viva's letter must have been overlooked. They were bringing it to her now, and she opened the door impatiently.

But the servant who was returning carried only a card. Mr. Eli Curzon had called already, and was asking to see her.

He was a tall, thin, clean-shaven man of about thirty, with uncommon eyes of a cold, slaty blue, which gave a somewhat sinister cast to an otherwise pleasant face. He spoke with a slow, deliberate softness.

"I trust that you have received the letter Mr. Durnford instructed me to write you, Miss Veryan. He thought it best to give you that explanation of how matters stand before you saw me."

Madeline inclined her head coldly

"I received the letter ten minutes ago."

"Indeed, I imagined that you would get it last night. You will barely have had time to consider it. But I presume that you will return to Melbourne?"

"No, I shall remain in England."

The secretary's face seemed to fall a little at the announcement.

"I was to impress upon you that Mr. Durnford's decision is absolutely final. If you were thinking of making a further appeal to him——"

Madeline drew herself up to the full height of her stately figure, her sweet face a little flushed.

"I should not think of doing so. I have not, in fact, made any appeal to Mr. Durnford. He gave an invitation for me to my father, which Mr. Veryan answered without consulting me. When my father told me of it on his death-bed, and urged me to accept Mr. Durnford's offer, I simply wrote saying that I would do so if Mr. Durnford's offer was still open. It is not. The matter is ended. You can assure him that I should have come to England in any case, and that he need feel no responsibility for my coming. Otherwise, of course, I should have written from Melbourne and awaited his answer."

The man's face, which had cleared a little as she began to speak, still showed a certain uneasiness as she finished.

"You have other friends in England, then?" he asked, and hastened to add, as he watched her face, "You must pardon my apparent inquisitiveness, but, despite his decision, which he felt to be unavoidable, Mr. Durnford is very concerned for your welfare. He would consider that I had acquitted the task intrusted to me very badly if I can tell him nothing of your plans or how you propose to live. You informed him in your letters that your father had left you unprovided for. You have other friends?"

Once more the girl flushed slightly.

"I do not see how Mr. Durnford can concern himself about me when you assure him that he is in no way responsible for my coming to England."

The secretary fidgeted uneasily where he stood, for Madeline had not asked him to sit down, or taken a seat herself.

"If you were thinking of obtaining an engagement of any sort in England, Mr. Durnford might be able to assist you, and would be anxious to do so."

"He is very kind," she said, coldly.

"I, too, should be most happy to offer you any help or advice that lies in my power. You cannot, of course, know England very well after your long absence. New professions for women have arisen. If you cared to learn typewriting, I could probably obtain an engagement for you."

She thanked him with a shade less coldness, wondering whether her instinctive prejudice against the man was altogether justified. It seemed as though he wished to be kind. But she could only tell him that her plans were at present unformed. She could decide nothing, she told herself, until she heard from Viva.

"You will let me know when you have decided?" he urged, but once again Madeline felt prejudiced against the apparent curiosity, and answered very formally. Her manner showed him clearly that the interview was at an end. But he still lingered restlessly.

"For the present you are remaining here?" he said. "In case Mr. Durnford wishes to write to you again."

"He can scarcely wish it, if his decision is final, as you say. You must assure him, please, that I do not pretend to have the slightest claim upon him."

Mr. Curzon went downstairs biting his nails. Outside in the street he stopped to light a cigarette and think over the interview.

"Bother it," he said to himself, savagely, "why doesn't she go back to the other side of the world, or tell me what she has up her sleeve? We shall never know a moment's peace if I lose sight of her. If only I had known that she was such a beauty—but how 'stand-offish'! If she suspects anything we are lost."

He might have felt reassured had he realised that, far from suspecting anything, Miss Veryan had already put both him and Mr. Durnford out of her thoughts to wonder again why Lady Alverdale had not written.

She paced the little sitting-room in unconquerable restlessness until the next delivery of letters. It could bring her only letters posted in London, as she had already ascertained from the hotel servants, and she felt little hope, therefore, of it ending her anxiety. The hopelessness increased her feeling of relief when Viva's letter was put into her hand, and she tore it open hastily, to read with no little astonishment:

"MY DEAREST MADELINE,—I am in London, and dying to see you. Can you meet me at eight beside the Nelson Monument in Trafalgar Square. I will tell you everything then, and why I cannot come to your hotel or ask you to come to mine. Looking forward to our meeting, your broken-hearted V."

CHAPTER TWO.

Viva, Lady Alverdale.

THE modest hotel at which Madeline had taken up her quarters on arriving in England was well within twenty minutes' walking distance of the strange tryst appointed by Lady Alverdale in her mysterious letter, but at seven o'clock she could restrain her impatience no longer, and set out for Trafalgar Square. The day had seemed interminably long to her. For a burning curiosity to know the reason of Viva's secrecy was added to her impatience to meet her friend.

Lady Alverdale had not arrived yet—she had scarcely dared to hope it—when she reached the monument, towering up dimly into a dark sky, and wandered round the four sides of its base. It wanted more than half an hour yet to the time appointed for their meeting, but she would not leave the spot, although the notice of the passers-by, who stared curiously at the tall, handsome figure in the shadow of the stonework, was disturbing.

Some man said "Good evening," and she was turning to walk away, more frightened than ever by her novel position, alone at night in the very centre of London, when something familiar in the soft, deliberate voice made her look at the man who was addressing her, to find it Mr. Eli Curzon, her visitor of the morning.

"You have lost your way, Miss Veryan?" he said. "The London streets are very confusing when you have been away from them for some time. May I have the pleasure of being your guide?"

"Thank you; I am only waiting for a friend," she said coldly, feeling again the instinctive prejudice with which she had first met the secretary.

"Indeed? Then I will wait with you, if I may, until he comes. This is scarcely the place for you to be alone at this hour."

Despite the prejudice, Madeline would have been glad to accept his offer, but Lady Alverdale's letter had given her quite an exaggerated sense of the need of caution, and she felt that Viva would not like to find her with a companion. She declined the offer with a touch of awkwardness, and liked the man better because he left her at once.

She did not guess, as her eager eyes once more scanned the passing crowd for the one figure that filled her mind, that Mr. Curzon had strolled away only to return at the other side of the way and take up his position in a dark doorway to watch the meeting between Miss Veryan and her "friend."

Madeline had not undeceived him as to the sex of the latter, and it was with some little surprise, therefore, that he saw the slight, graceful figure of a lady, whose furs, even in the distance, suggested wealth, step out of a hansom and join the solitary figure he was watching in the shadow of the monument. Mr. Curzon looked quite haggard as he watched their meeting.

As for Madeline, she had forgotten his existence, and, for the matter of that, the existence of every other onlooker.

For it was really Viva's voice that sounded in her ears—the old Viva full of repentance for an act of thoughtlessness recognised too late.

For one moment she forgot the place, and, opening her arms, clasped the dainty little figure in its costly furs to her breast.

"And you have had to wait," Viva was running on with her old breathless vivacity, "in a place like this. I never thought till afterwards—it was the first spot you were sure to know which entered my mind. I hoped I should be here first. It is not nearly eight yet."

"No; I was so eager to see you," cried Madeline, "and I have not waited long. I have thought of you every moment since I landed. But why did you not come to me at Scrivener's, or tell me where you were, Viva?"

Lady Alverdale had slipped her arm within her friend's and pressed it tightly.

"We cannot talk here. You have not dined?"

"No; I could think of nothing but meeting you."

"Then we will go to a restaurant, and I will tell you

Get your wife a copy of the August LADY'S MAGAZINE to read during the holidays

everything, and what I want you to do for me, Madeline darling, if you will. I dared not come to you because Alverdale is in town, spying on me. He will perhaps see us together, but that does not matter so much, as long as he does not know who you are. As Madeline Veryan he will not let you enter the house, and you must come to me and help me, Maidie. But we will talk about that when I have told you all that I am suffering. I have never had anybody to tell but you, dear."

She was taking her back as she spoke to the hansom, which had waited at the kerb, and Lady Alverdale gave the driver the name of a well-known restaurant in Oxford Street. In another moment they were seated side by side in the dark cab, being driven rapidly through the half-obscure streets. Madeline felt strangely happy, and yet strangely disturbed. Viva, her own Viva, was at her side, her hand clasped in hers. But Viva was in trouble. A new note of world-worn heart-weariness, which she detected even through the old vivacity, saddened her.

Lady Alverdale was still chattering, speaking as people will who have too much to say, of the mere triviality of the moment.

"Muratti's is very nice. You get very pretty music there. I have dined two or three times at the place with Alverdale. There are sure to be some celebrities, if you care about celebrities. It is the sort of crowd in which one can feel really more secluded than in a quiet little place. I hate dull places, don't you?"

Madeline felt that any and every place would be alike to her so long as Viva was at her side and they were free to exchange confidences. What was it that her friend would have to tell her?

It was not until they were in the fashionable restaurant, brilliant with its electric lights, and were seated at a little table for two placed near the balustrade of a balcony that ran round the hall, it was not till then that the two women could look into each other's face with a clear glance of friendly scrutiny.

Lady Alverdale uttered an exclamation.

"My darling Madeline, how you have improved. Why, you were quite plain, and now you are perfectly beautiful. I know that I have gone off awfully, but you are one of those women who grow prettier as they grow older. I wish that I had your secret. I have lost all my good looks."

Madeline scarcely heard the compliment. She was regarding her friend with disturbed, questioning eyes.

"No, dear," she said, with grave sincerity, "you have not lost any of your beauty." To her it was more striking because of the appeal which it made to her pity. "But, oh! Viva darling, why are you so pale—so different?"

She had paused, finding it difficult to get a word, and the questioning doubt did not leave her eyes when her companion answered with a bitter little laugh:

"I do not suppose that any woman could endure what I do without showing it. Why do you look at me like that, Madeline?"

Madeline's hand clasped hers across the table; her grave, tender eyes seemed to look through the great dark ones to the soul behind.

"Viva, dear, you have not tried to deaden your suffering by taking morphia?"

Lady Alverdale's pallor became a shade more intense, but her voice was strangely calm as she answered with another question:

"What makes you think that, Madeline?"

"It was the bane of my father's life, although I have never told you or anybody else in the world. That was the real cause of his failure and his death, and I know the signs so well. Have I not reason to? But it is a terrible thing. You must conquer it, if what I see in your eyes——"

A glance from Lady Alverdale made her stop abruptly, to find a waiter at her elbow serving the soup. "What wine would madame wish to order?" It seemed to her that the man would never leave the table.

When he retired at last Viva lowered her voice.

"I knew that you would save me, Madeline. Your eyes are so clear, and you see at once that I am really being poisoned."

"Poisoned?" Madeline's eyes opened wide. Her cheeks had turned pale. Viva answered without emotion.

"Yes, I have suspected it for some time. I could not understand the strange sensations I have so often. But you see at once what is being done. It is morphia, you say?"

Madeline interrupted her, her voice hoarse with the horror of what was being said.

"But, Viva, who can be poisoning you?"

The great dark eyes flashed ominously.

"If Alverdale is not poisoning me, he at least would be glad to see me dead, he and the woman who helps him to turn my own child against me, who would like to take my place. He would not lift a finger to save me. He would not believe a word against Madame Etoille. Oh! Madeline, I want you to come and take her place. I want you to teach my child, and teach her to love me, to let me feel for the first time that I have a friend in the house instead of an enemy—a friend who will not intrigue to gain my husband's love and turn him against me. Madeline, you must come."

Her voice had risen excitedly, and Madeline's sounded strangely soft and controlled in contrast as she answered:

"Of course I will come, dear, if you need me."

Viva was soothed at once by the promise.

"You spoke of a cousin of your mother's," she said. "I was afraid——"

Madeline smiled a little bitterly.

"He no longer wishes to see me. If I cannot be governess to little Dolores, as you wish, and as I should love to be, it would mean that I must seek an engagement as governess to the children of strangers."

Viva clapped her dainty little hands with delight. It was a gesture that her friend remembered of old, and made her more than ever the impulsive Viva that she had loved.

"Then everything is as I wished," she cried, "and the only thing to arrange is what name you will pass under and what story I shall tell Alverdale to account for the engagement. That horrible woman pretends that she is leaving to-morrow. Alverdale will persuade her to stay. He always does. But this time he will be baffled when he finds that I have somebody to take her place."

Her voice rose excitedly again. Madeline was looking puzzled and uneasy.

"You wish me to come under a false name?"

"Yes, yes; it is the only way. It would spoil everything if Alverdale knew who you were. Indeed, he has said that you shall never enter the house. He has not forgotten your letter."

"But if Lord Alverdale objects to my presence in the house——" began Madeline anxiously, and the great dark eyes flashed again.

"If he wishes to keep me separated from every friend while I am being poisoned, you will take his side like the others and let him have his way," cried Lady Alverdale. "I did not think it of you, Madeline. Then nobody will help me."

Her excited words trembled on the verge of tears, and Madeline hastened to reassure her.

"Of course I will help you, dear. It was only the thought of passing under another name that startled me. But if you are really being poisoned, as I cannot help thinking from your face, I cannot consider little scruples. Lord Alverdale does not know my mother's maiden name, 'Durnford.' I will take that, and come to you as 'May Durnford.'"

Viva had changed back instantaneously to enthusiasm. She was already arranging her plans. It might excite suspicion, and put those who were plotting against her life on their guard if Madeline returned with her. She would get back home as quickly as possible, explain to her husband that she had engaged a "Miss May Durnford" to take Madame Etoille's place, and make ready for her friend's arrival two days later. Madeline would need that delay to go through her belongings, and make sure that they would not betray her actual identity when she reached Kingstairs Castle.

"But for two days you will be in danger while I am away from you," cried Madeline, who felt nervous of allowing Viva out of her sight after what she had heard. "How dare you go back when you know that you are being poisoned."

Her friend smiled sadly.

"I have suffered the risk for a long while now. I can suffer it a little longer. It has given me new hope and new courage to see you and know that you are going to protect me, Madeline. But I want you to give me a solemn promise, a promise which I should not accept or believe from any woman in the world but you."

For a single instant a glance of something that, if not suspicion, was less than perfect confidence, passed across her mobile face. "I want you to promise me that no subtle persuasion of Alverdale's shall ever make you turn against me or think evil of me. You wonder that I could suggest such a thing, but you have not yet met my husband, you do not know how persuasive he is, how handsome, how charming to every woman but me. I have known no woman who could be fair after she had met him and felt his influence. But you would not allow even Alverdale to turn you against me, Maidie."

There was intreaty in her voice, and Madeline answered with warmth and assurance:

"You know that I shall never turn against you, dear. Nobody could make me do that. Of course, there may be some faults on your side. You used to have faults, you know, dear, and I always told you of them."

"Yes, I know that I have a hundred faults. I have done quite enough to make Alverdale hate me and wish I were dead," cried Viva, with one of her characteristically sudden fits of humility, "but that woman ought not to try and win his love away from me."

They had talked through a long meal to the accompaniment of a softly wailing band in the great hall beneath the balcony, interrupted every now and again by the arrival of the silent-footed waiter bringing the courses, which Madeline, at least, ate absently, with only the vaguest idea of what she was enjoying. Now her companion appeared for the first time to remember the lapse of time, and, after ordering coffee and liqueurs, she glanced at her jewelled watch.

"It is time that I was going. How quickly the time has passed, and the last train home leaves Victoria at ten." She was referring as she spoke to a local time-table she had taken from her purse, and drank off her liqueur hastily. "I have just time to call at the hotel for my things. No, dear, there is no need for you to hasten. I shall leave you here.

"Now that our plan is all arranged, I am full of nervousness lest Alverdale should see us together and suspect. He may be lurking anywhere. This must be our parting until you join me at the Castle in your new *rôle*."

She seemed, indeed, full of a new nervousness as well as impatience, and would not allow her friend to accompany her further than the head of the staircase.

Madeline returned to the table to sip her coffee, conscious of a sudden and complete dejection of spirits. The presence of her friend, the knowledge that she was still necessary to her, had served to support her through the interview and given her a sense of excitement that made depression impossible.

But now that Viva was gone the story that she had heard showed itself in its sordid horribleness, and the part she had promised to play, necessary as it must be, seemed to partake of the sordidness.

Viva seemed to propose that she should win her way into her husband's confidence by a pretence of sympathy, and her whole open, honest nature shrank from the task before her.

To add to her depression, her friend was going back alone to a house where she had every reason to believe that attempts were being made on her life. Afterwards she was to blame herself bitterly that she had not insisted on accompanying her.

She had finished her coffee and risen to go when, without a moment's warning, every light in the building went out. The band broke off in the middle of a pathetic waltz of Weber's. Then, above the confused babel of voices, all asking what had happened, one word rose clear and distinct below her, the terrible word "Fire!"

CHAPTER THREE.

The Fire at Muratti's.

EVERYBODY will remember the lamentable panic at Muratti's Restaurant in which three lives were lost in a mad rush from the balcony to the one awkward staircase that led to the lower floor, a catastrophe all the more shocking because the flight of the diners had been unjustified by any real danger.

Some defect in the electric light installation had set fire to a small portion of the wood casing on the lower floor, and the fusion of a wire had left the place suddenly in darkness. A foolish cry from somebody who noticed the smouldering wood had done the rest.

Madeline had, unfortunately, just risen from the table and taken a few steps towards the door when darkness fell on the restaurant. Before she could decide in her uncertainty as to the position of the exit, whether to go on or return to a seat in the hope that the light would appear again, she was almost thrown down by a man, who must have been familiar with the place, running for the stairs.

A whole crowd followed him, and, barely recovering her balance, Madeline was caught in the panic-stricken stream struggling blindly to the exit.

At the door itself it was met by another crowd, and the two merged into a fighting and struggling mass, that swayed backwards and forwards in the darkness, those nearest the exit trying to bear back against the intolerable pressure behind, which increased every moment as fresh relays of excited men and women came running up, overturning chairs and tables in their terror-stricken scramble for the door to which they were directed only by the groans and shouts of the struggling crowd there.

Madeline, already dazed by the first rough onslaught of the crowd, found herself carried hither and thither unresistingly as it swayed. She realised, as many of those around her did, too late, that the narrow doorway to which they were being pushed forward meant danger and not escape. Over the hubbub of groans and cries a man's voice had raised itself, clear and incisive.

"There is no fire. You will only injure yourselves by trying to get out. The light will be turned on again in a moment."

The clear-reaching voice, calmly authoritative, was one to inspire confidence, and the pressure at that immediate point relaxed perceptibly.

To Madeline, imagining every moment that the last point of endurance was reached, and that she must sink down to be trampled under foot by the unreasoning inhuman mass that hemmed her in on every side, it came as the voice of a saviour, inspiring her with fresh hope.

It was so deliberate and effortless that she could not believe that the speaker was struggling like herself in the crowd, and yet it seemed quite near. Quite close to her then, if she could but reach it, was some harbour of refuge where the stream would pass her by, and she gathered her ebbing strength to try to force her way towards it.

The voice, still raising itself against the turmoil of cries, gave her direction, and she strained every nerve trying to reach it, making as great an effort to get away from the point they were all madly seeking as those around her were to gain it.

The voice assisted her, for the confidence it inspired had affected all those within reach, making them, although they pressed forward, do so less excitedly.

It was as well to get out when everybody else seemed so intent on doing so, but there could not, after all, be such a desperate need for haste when no sign of fire had yet shown itself. They squeezed back out of her way so that they might push themselves into her place. She was nearing the edge of the stream now, and made her way with less difficulty.

She could turn now instead of forcing her way always backwards. But as she did so, and a man thrust his way past her, glad to think he was one place nearer to the exit, the ever-moving mass surged back upon her, suddenly throwing her forward. The wreck of an overturned chair caught her feet. She felt herself falling. Before she could raise herself there were feet on her dress holding her down.

"Mind out, there's a woman down. Keep back, you're trampling on her," somebody cried, but the warning meant nothing to the senseless, helpless crowd swaying back upon her.

A heavy boot grazed her head, and she raised herself desperately to a sitting position, but somebody—a woman, fortunately—was standing on her knee now, moving her feet uneasily as she found the foothold insecure.

Other stumbling feet kicked her, and for the first time since the alarm Madeline opened her lips in a sharp cry of alarm and despair. This, then, was the end—to be trampled to death under the feet of men and women, who a few moments ago had been rational beings, dining in the same hall with her, incapable even of wishing her an injury.

But even as she uttered her cry, help came. The voice that had once before given her hope sounded above her. She was conscious that a clear space was being made around her, as much by sheer force as by the command and appeal of the authoritative voice.

The intolerable strain on her lower limbs relaxed. Now strong arms were under her helping her to rise, and she struggled to her feet with the skirt of her dress torn half away.

She was faint and dizzy, so badly bruised that she could scarcely stand, but the man who had saved her, the Man with the Voice, was behind her, supporting her; his arms made a shield around her. She was vaguely conscious that he was speaking to her, his face just above the level of hers, asking whether she were hurt, encouraging her.

"I am going to try and get you out of the crowd," he said, his voice uneven now with the effort he was exerting. "There is no danger at all in remaining here. Bear back against me and we will force a way out. These maniacs are only killing those in front."

But already they were in the thick of the current again, hemmed in behind by a new, frenzied reinforcement of the crowd there. Some of the people from the other side of the balcony, finding that their progress was blocked there, had conceived the idea that the other stream was escaping first, and had come tearing round the whole length of the balcony.

You have, perhaps, often wondered how a newspaper is run? "The Works of a Newspaper," in the August PEARSON'S, will tell you all you want to know about it.

in a mob, scattering tables and chairs in their way and increasing their panic as they ran, with the thought that they were being left behind while everybody else got out.

Against the impetus of this new crowd, Madeline's protector would have been powerless, even had he been unhampered by the presence of a half-fainting girl in his arms. The pressure became more cruel, and the block in front seemed to give way before it. As if a barrier of some sort had suddenly broken, the crowd swept on, carrying them with it.

"I am afraid that we shall have to go with the current after all," said the voice, with something of apology in the tone. "Once through the doorway we shall be able to get out of it, if we stay on the landing. These maniacs will all make for the staircase."

It was the thought of the narrow doorway that made him afraid for the girl, whose strength seemed already exhausted, the girl of whom he knew nothing, but for whom he forgot his own safety simply because she was a woman and Chance had singled her out to be the special object of his care.

Nearer and nearer they were being carried to the fatal spot, pressed towards it from all sides. The oppression was terrible.

Madeline tried to speak.

"You must put down your arms. They will be broken. And I can bear it."

Despite her words, her voice sounded as though the last point of endurance had been reached.

"No, I think they protect you a little," he said. It was questionable whether he could have moved them now had he tried. But he was glad she had spoken. He had been wondering himself whether he would get his arms broken or not. The test had come now. They were in the doorway, jammed there; it seemed for one unendurable moment immovably. Then the pressure behind thrust them through, and it was possible to draw one's breath.

But now was the time for struggle. The current was carrying them to the stairs, and the man no longer allowed them to be borne along unresistingly. He was fighting his way for himself and his companion to the square open space beyond the head of the fatal flight, the groans and cries from which showed that the crowd, ever being pushed down it, found their progress still impeded. Nobody followed them.

Like frightened sheep, every panic-stricken soul that struggled through the doorway ran for the stairs to make the terrible block there more deadly. It was in this staircase that the three actual deaths, due to the panic, took place. The landing beyond was quite free of people, and the man drew a deep breath, which showed how great his exertion had been.

Then he turned to Madeline.

"I hope you are not seriously hurt?"

"No, I owe you my life, if we escape."

"I do not think there is any doubt of our escaping now," he said, pleasantly. "I do not believe for a moment that there is any fire or any cause at all for alarm. Some little accident has happened to the lighting apparatus. That is all. You must promise me to remain here until I return, and on no account to think of going down alone. If there should be any danger you may be quite sure that I shall return in time to warn you of it."

Madeline caught at his arm.

"But where are you going? Not into that terrible crowd again?"

"I must do something to try and stop them. Listen, they are being killed on the stairs."

She did not try to dissuade him, although her heart sank.

"I shall wait here until you return," she said, simply. "I hope you will succeed—and be safe."

When she heard his voice again, he was back at the doorway, calling above the heads of the people there into the room, announcing that the stairway was blocked, and begging them to remain where they were. She wondered how he could stand for a moment against the crowd pressing out while he spoke. Then a woman screamed near the doorway, and she heard his voice no more.

His silence terrified her, and made the nightmare going on around her more horrible. She had scarcely realised its horror, except as it affected herself.

This frenzied crowd had not appeared to her like a collection of human beings; it was rather some strange, terrible entity when it trampled on and crushed her as when it groaned and reviled with its own pains.

It had seemed to her, and seemed still, as though she and her rescuer were the only human beings there struggling together against a monster, concerned alone with each other. She was as concerned for his safety as for her own.

The danger of the others was a thing that scarcely reached her consciousness, and the groaning on the stairs became a hundred times more awful when she imagined the Man with the Voice being swept along down them in the irresistible current. She strained her ears trying to distinguish his cry, as she felt that she would, among the others.

It seemed hours to her that she waited. Afterwards it was stated that the whole panic, from the moment when the light failed to the clearing of the fatal staircase, lasted less than five minutes. Madeline was never able to believe it. Why, a hundred times five minutes passed while she strained her ears in the darkness trying to catch some syllable of a voice she would never forget above the cries, the ceaseless tramp of feet.

But the sounds died away at last. There was no hint of a struggle in the doorway, the footsteps coming from it became fewer and fewer, and died away altogether, and silence followed. She became more frightened than ever. The balcony and the staircase alike seemed to be clear now. What was to prevent her rescuer coming back to her, if he were alive and uninjured.

She was still feeling as though they were the only two real people in the building, and imagining that she must be the chief object of his concern. It did not occur to her that he might have been exerting himself to protect some other woman in whom he must feel just as much, or as little, interest as in herself.

The silence was broken now by leisurely steps coming from the direction of the balcony. He had managed to force his way in, then, to try to quieten the people inside, and had remained until all need for his presence was at an end.

"Is that you?" she cried, and remembered as she spoke that she did not know even the name of the man who filled her thoughts.

The steps stopped abruptly.

"I am here," she called again, but there was no answer, and no sound.

"Who is it? Who is there?" she cried, vaguely alarmed by the silence. There was no answer, but she could hear the steps approaching. They stopped again, as if waiting for direction, and she called again, "I am here."

As she spoke a blow descended heavily on her head, half stunning her. She was only dimly conscious that a hand was grasping her throat, that she was being dragged to the head of the steps. Then she felt herself being thrust down them with brutal force, and she flung out her hands blindly as she fell forward.

The next thing of which she was conscious was being lifted easily in a pair of strong arms. She opened her eyes, wondering to find that she was no longer in the dark. Two or three men stood near her, one of them, a waiter, with a white, scared face, was carrying a reading-lamp in his hand, which dimly illuminated the staircase. Madeline's glance passed him by and turned to the face of the man who held her in his arms.

"Thank goodness for a light," he was saying to the other men. "I have just found this lady unconscious."

It was the Man with the Voice, but Madeline felt that she would have recognised him even if he had not spoken.

"I waited, but somebody threw me down," she said, her chief concern that he should think she had lacked confidence in his promise or broken her own.

It seemed to her as though a sudden shadow of uneasiness passed across his face as she spoke. She closed her eyes again, conscious of an agonising pain above her forehead where she had been struck. She must have lost consciousness again then, for when she opened her eyes again she was in a strange room lying on a couch. There were several people around her, but the Man with the Voice was not among them, and she closed her eyes again wearily. Somebody was speaking in a brisk, grating voice.

"No, I do not think it is a case for the hospital. There may be a slight concussion, but it is chiefly shock, and she will probably be well enough to drive home after a rest."

The doctor, as he appeared to be, turned to address Madeline.

"You must keep perfectly quiet for a day or two, and you will soon be all right. You were knocked down, and received a kick on the forehead, eh?"

"No, I was struck with a heavy stick, I think, and thrown down the steps when everybody had gone," she said, her voice showing the perplexity that she felt in remembering. The doctor was ready to recognise hysteria.

"I do not think anybody would do that," he said, cheerfully, and turned to one of the men near, the waiter with the white, scared face.

"The lady was quite alone when you found her, wasn't she?"

"No, there was a gentleman with her. He said he had just tumbled across her, the gentleman who carried her in here. He went off in a cab as soon as he had laid her down."

Madeline was conscious of a great disappointment. She had wanted so much to thank her rescuer, and he had gone before she had even learnt his name. She turned to the waiter, hoping that he might know it, but was disappointed. The waiter did not remember ever seeing the gentleman before.

The doctor altogether misconstrued her anxiety. This was always the worst of assisting hysterical women. They were always ready to think you had injured them.

"I would not bother about his name, if I were you," he said, in a tone that was meant to be soothing. "The gentleman, whoever he may be, could not possibly have any object for throwing you down the stairs."

CHAPTER FOUR.

Her Lost Ladyship.

It was a full week before Madeline started for Kingstairs to take up her new *rôle* at the Castle. The doctor who saw her at the restaurant after the panic had been right in stating that she had received no serious injury.

She had escaped even the slight concussion of the brain which he had feared, an escape that was remarkable considering the experience through which she had passed. But the shock of that experience had kept her in bed for three days, and made it a week before she could satisfy her constant and increasing anxiety to help and protect her friend.

Viva had, of course, been informed of the postponement and its cause. Madeline had, indeed, wired early on the morning after the panic, to save her friend the uneasiness which she would otherwise feel from reading the morning's newspaper, and other messages had been exchanged.

She understood that, as Viva had prophesied, Madame Etoille had been persuaded to stay on at the Castle, but it was to be only until the new governess arrived. The fact added to Madeline's anxiety, and made her more than ever eager to get to her friend.

Viva's last letter, received on the morning that she started, showed her as eagerly looking forward to her arrival.

Alverdale had left home for a few days, which was fortunate, since it would give them an opportunity of practising their new nominal relationship before he returned and met "Miss Durnford."

Viva begged her to come by an earlier train than the one arranged, and promised to meet her herself at the station. Madeline was only too eager to agree, especially that the ordeal of meeting Lord Alverdale and playing a part before him was to be delayed. She wired off an answer and started almost at once.

At Victoria she bought a newspaper. The adjourned inquest on the victims of the panic had been reopened, and she read the report through in the train, as she had read every newspaper mention of the affair.

She had hoped that there would be some allusion to the one man who had tried to restore confidence and allay the panic, some reference to his courage which would enable her to know his name, the name of the man to whom she owed her life. Her own name had appeared among those of the "injured," but if her rescuer's was in the paper, it appeared there without any reference that could enable her to recognise it as his. Nor could she find any mention of him now in the evidence given at the inquest.

The unsuccessful search for it occupied her until the sight of the sea reminded her that she must be nearing her destination, and turned the current of her thoughts to Viva again.

In her messages Lady Alverdale had appeared to ignore the suspicion that she was being poisoned. It appeared as though she had agreed to Madame Etoille postponing her departure without protest. To Madeline it seemed a catastrophe. If it were really the governess who was attempting her life—and it was on her that Viva's suspicion had fallen without a moment's hesitation—then the fact that she was about to leave the house only made her a hundred times more dangerous.

Now, if ever, she would try to administer the fatal dose which would complete her work. The absence of Lord Alverdale was capable of a sinister significance.

If, as the heart-broken wife had hinted, her husband was an accomplice in the plot against her life, he would not care to be in the house when the crime was consummated. And Viva had written unsuspectingly, as if his departure made it a matter of indifference whether the governess remained or not.

Madeline's blood ran cold at the thought of her blindness. Would she reach her in time to warn and save her? She had worked herself into a very fever of anxiety and impatience by the time that the train stopped in its journeying round the Kent coast at the little station of Kingstairs, and she looked out eagerly. If Viva was on the platform she would know that she was in time.

A little group of country people waiting to go on with the train obscured her view, but when they had taken their seats she found herself alone on the platform except for porter and guard. The former approached, touching his cap.

"Any luggage, ma'am?"

She answered him hastily. "Is there anybody to meet me from the Castle?" she asked.

The man had seen nobody, but would inquire. The guard was already taking out her luggage, and the train went on, leaving it on the platform. The porter came back. There was nobody from the Castle.

"Can you get me a fly?" she asked, impatiently, and the man shook his head. There was no such thing as a hired conveyance at Kingstairs.

"The carriage from the Castle is sure to be here in a minute or two, ma'am," he added, noticing her distress. "It is not often the train is in to time like to-day. We generally count on its being five or ten minutes late."

She tried hard to accept the explanation, but when five minutes had dragged by she could wait no longer. She found the porter looking down the road, hoping to catch sight of the carriage.

The Castle was more than two miles away, following the road, he told her, speaking as though the distance were an impossible one for a lady, "and it was uphill nearly all the way. The carriage was sure to be here directly."

Madeline had ceased to hope for it. Something had happened to Viva. She must get to her without a moment's delay, and she waited only long enough to have the way pointed out to her.

The road was a pretty one, winding whitely at first through fields of wheat and barley, before it opened upon the downs. But Madeline had no eye for the beauty of the country, even when the highest point of the downs was reached, and before her lay the sea, beyond a sweeping coastline of tall, white chalk cliffs.

The Castle stood right on the brink of the cliff, its stone tower showing above a belt of woodland that crowned the highest promontory. The position was a striking and romantic one, and few people turned the bend of the hill and caught sight of it for the first time without being struck by its picturesqueness.

But Madeline could think of nothing except that the place held her friend, and that evil must have happened to her. For she had met no carriage coming to meet her, and the fact increased her anxiety with every step she took.

The road sloped downwards now, and she quickened her pace almost to a run, slackening speed only when she approached the lodge gates. The gates were open, and nobody appeared as she passed through. Madeline went onwards to the house, relieved to find there no outward sign of calamity.

But her heart was in her mouth as she inquired of the neat maid who opened the door whether Lady Alverdale was at home, and she was a little taken aback when the girl answered that she was. Could all her alarm have been caused after all by an act of flagrant forgetfulness on her friend's part? She knew from old experience that it would not be altogether unlike Viva.

"Lady Alverdale promised that I should be met at the station," she said, colouring a little involuntarily as for the first time she gave her assumed name.

She was left in the hall while the maid went in search of her ladyship to inform her of her arrival. To Madeline, who felt that she could not be quite reassured until she and Viva had really met, the delay seemed intolerable. She listened impatiently to the sound of steps coming and going over the house.

Then at last a middle-aged woman appeared, the housekeeper of the establishment, as Madeline discovered. She was singularly plain and colourless, and Madeline instinctively conceived against her a little of that prejudice which—unjust as it is—one generally feels against a woman who has no trace of beauty. Her voice was as displeasingly neutral as her face.

"My lady does not appear to be at home," she said, "she was not expecting you till this evening. I will show you your room."

"But I had a letter from Lady Alverdale this morning," cried Madeline, "asking me to come by this train and promising to meet me."

"My lady gave us no directions, but it probably explains her absence. She will, no doubt, be at the station now."

"The Confessions of a Girl Gambler" start in the current number of SHORT STORIES.

Madeline explained the impossibility, making an effort not to show how alarmed she was. She must not be frightened into forgetfulness of her *rôle* and character. But it was very hard to conceal all the uneasy suspicion she felt, but which "Miss Durnford" had no right to show.

One question she could not restrain: "Has Madame Etoille left the house yet?"

She did not know whether to be relieved or not by the ready answer:

"Oh! yes, nearly two hours ago."

Mrs. Debenham, the housekeeper, was leading the way upstairs as she spoke, and Madeline followed her full of an uneasiness that was all the more disturbing because she dared not express it. If she could only tell the people in the house how eager Lady Alverdale had been to meet her—if they could only read her last letter—they would realise that search must be made for her at once, that the position was already serious, but to tell them or to show the letter would be to throw up her *rôle* at the outset.

The temptation to do so would have been even greater had she not noticed that, without her enlightenment, the housekeeper herself was feeling some uneasiness.

"I will find out whether my lady has had the carriage out," she said, as she left the visitor in her room, and Madeline felt that she could only wait. She paced the floor racking her mind to think what could have become of her friend, and had not even thought of removing her hat when a maid brought up tea to the pretty little boudoir adjoining her bedroom.

"Has Lady Alverdale returned yet?" she asked, and the girl shook her head.

"No, miss, we can't think what has become of her. She has not had the carriage out or told anybody that she was leaving the house, and nobody has seen her since lunch. We are becoming quite uneasy about her."

"Has Lord Alverdale been communicated with?" Madeline asked, and the girl's eyes opened in a questioning, half-suspicious surprise.

"Mrs. Debenham is just sending a telegram to his lordship, miss."

Her face seemed to say, "How should you guess that the disappearance seems to us so serious?"

Madeline felt that she ought to be satisfied, especially when she heard that the men servants had all been sent out to search for their missing mistress.

She was drinking her tea, of which she felt very much in need, when she became conscious of the sound of a scuffle outside her door.

"I will go in. I want to see what she is like," cried a little voice, imperiously.

Somebody, a nurse evidently, was remonstrating in a lower key, and Madeline rose and threw open the door. In her anxiety for Viva she had entirely forgotten Viva's child. Her heart filled with an emotion of unrestrainable tenderness for the little sprite of five or six who sprang into the room as the door opened. It carried her thoughts back abruptly to the little girl at school whom she had cared for and protected. For here was her image, only a little younger, a little smaller, a little more elf-like. For a moment she forgot that she was nominally only a new governess meeting her charge, and she clasped the child in her arms, all her anxiety for her friend expressing itself mutely in the warmth of her embrace.

The dull-faced nurse stood looking on with stolid non-approval.

"I told Miss Dolores that you would not like to be bothered yet, Miss," she said, "but she is so self-willed and so quick. She ran away from me."

Dolores had drawn herself free from the embrace, impatiently.

"Do you always kiss little girls like that?" she asked, with something of hostility in her little voice.

Madeline shook her head, smiling through dim eyes.

"No, dear, but you remind me of a little girl that I knew and used to be very, very fond of a good many years ago."

Dolores condescended to feel some interest.

"And where is the little girl now?"

Madeline was still smiling, but her voice had an underlying sadness as she answered:

"I do not know, but I am sure that we are going to be friends, aren't we, Dolores?"

Dolores drew back, doubtfully.

"Was the other little girl as pretty as I am?" she asked, and the nurse broke into perfunctory remonstrance.

"Oh! Miss Dolores, how often has your papa told you not to be so vain. Nobody will love you if you are."

"Papa does not want anybody to love me," cried the young lady, "and mamma says I am the prettiest little girl that ever was. I am prettier than the little girl you knew, aren't I?"

She was appealing to Madeline, who shook her head.

"No, you are not prettier, dear."

The transparent little face flushed suddenly scarlet. The great dark eyes were blazing.

"Then I sha'n't let you kiss me, and I shall never, never be friends," the child cried, passionately.

She was more like the Viva of old than ever. But Madeline had alone known how to soothe these outbursts of jealous temper.

"I did not say that the little girl I used to know was prettier than you, Dolores," she said; "if you like I will tell you exactly what she was like." She turned to the remonstrating nurse. "If Miss Dolores remains with me, I think we shall soon get to know one another."

"I sha'n't stay," said Dolores, rebelliously, and the nurse was preparing to insist when Madeline stopped her with a glance.

"Very well, dear, if you don't want to hear. Good-bye." She turned unconcernedly to pour herself out another cup of tea. The angry determination in the child's face became indecision.

"I told you that Miss Durnford would not want to be bothered with you yet," said the nurse, pursuing her advantage, and for answer Dolores slammed the door against her.

"I *shall* stay," she said, defiantly, and Madeline looked up with a smile.

"Very well, dear, if you wish."

Five minutes later Dolores had thrown her arms round her neck and kissed her of her own accord, begging her to love her more than anybody else in the world.

It was still like the old Viva, who could never value love that was shared by another. Madeline reasoned gently with the child as she had reasoned with her mother long ago, and suggested that Dolores should show her over the Castle.

She was longing to explore every corner and cranny of it. For Lady Alverdale could not have disappeared into thin air. Alive or dead, she must surely be found, if only diligent enough search were made.

The latter fear gripped more closely at her heart when she found that apparently earnest search was being made everywhere still without result. The fear deepened, while her eagerness to search the Castle itself died away, when Dolores, taking her through the luxuriously-furnished drawing-room, led her out through the open French windows to the terrace beyond, which fronted the whole length of the house.

The terrace was not more than twenty yards wide, and was bordered on the other side by a carved stone balustrade. Beyond it stretched the sea, and as Madeline reached the stone barrier and glanced over she was startled to find that she was looking down a precipice more than a hundred feet deep, with the waves dashing at its foot.

Further along the terrace a little group of servants stood talking, and looking down over the parapet as seeking something, and she put her hand on Dolores' shoulder.

"Let us go inside, dear."

She found herself shuddering, but not with cold. It was so easy to guess what the servants' fear was—and to share it.

CHAPTER FIVE.

The Man with the Voice.

NIGHT had come without bringing any success to the searchers. Dolores, who wanted her "pretty mamma," and would not be satisfied by the plausible stories of her nurse, had been soothed to sleep by Madeline, and lay now with one of her hands tightly clasped in hers.

The little girl's dependence touched her inexpressibly. In her heart she was making vows, as her dim eyes rested on the delicate little face that looked more than ever ethereal and spirit-like now that Dolores slept. She had come to Kingstairs to watch over Viva and "take her part." If she had come too late, she could still serve her friend by watching over her child. It seemed a sacred charge intrusted to her.

The nurse, who had left her alone, entered the room softly, with a summons. Lord Alverdale was home in answer to the housekeeper's telegram, and wished to see her in the library.

Madeline rose and gently released her hand. The child was sleeping quite peacefully, and the nurse showed her surprise.

"You have quite won Miss Dolores' heart, miss. She would never go to sleep for me or Madame Etoille."

She started at the name. After the thoughts that had been in her mind about the departed governess, it sounded strange even to hear her spoken of like this, innocently and without suspicion.

Her calm, well-controlled face took an added pallor as she walked slowly down the broad staircase to the library. Her firm lips compressed themselves. She was going to meet the man who was responsible for the ruin of Viva's life.

The door of the library was open as she approached it, and she could hear the housekeeper's dull, even voice intoning.

Then, as it ceased, another voice, contrastingly clear and distinct, fell on her ears, asking a question.

"Have you let Miss Durnford know that I should like to see her?"

Mrs. Debenham was answering, but Madeline no longer heard her voice. The corridor, where she had stopped abruptly, seemed to swim round her. Was it possible that two men could have exactly the same wonderful voice?

In her heart she knew that it was impossible, and yet the man speaking in the library must be Lord Alverdale. How could he speak with the voice of her rescuer, the man of whose nobility and goodness she had felt so strangely certain and assured?

She felt dizzy with the sudden clash of two diametrically-opposed ideas, with the effort to think of Viva's husband as a good man or her hero of the restaurant as a bad one. Which was the real Lord Alverdale?

It terrified her to think that she must meet him instantly, without time to decide or to calm her thoughts.

She must meet her rescuer, to whom she had wished to express all her gratitude, wondering whether he was a villain who had connived at his wife's possible death. She must meet Viva's husband, not as Viva would have wished, critically and impartially, but already half-persuaded that he had been misjudged and maligned.

The ordeal was too great, and she was turning to take flight, when she found it already too late. Mrs. Debenham had appeared at the door and caught sight of her.

"Here is Miss Durnford, my lord," Madeline heard her say, and then the housekeeper came forward.

"His lordship is wishing to ask you about my lady's letter to you, Miss Durnford."

She stood back for her to pass, and Madeline went on, hopelessly.

If she had retained any lingering hope that she would find herself after all deceived by a chance resemblance of voice, it faded away instantly as she entered the room. There was no mistaking the tall, splendidly-built man who was stepping forward to meet her.

The handsome, clear-cut face, calm with the calmness of perfect strength and control, a face that seemed to her at once full of tenderness and yet full of command, was not one to be forgotten, although she had seen it but once and only for a moment. The moment had left it stamped indelibly on her mind.

The grave eyes that met hers showed no sign of recognition, however, and while she was asking herself whether she could admit her indebtedness to him while still deceiving him as to her name and the actual object of her visit, the one opportunity of doing so passed, leaving her conscious of relief, but, at the same time, of shame for her ingratitude.

Lord Alverdale was already asking about the letter.

"I am very much disturbed by my wife's inexplicable absence from the house," he said. "If she gave you a promise to be here when you arrived, Miss Durnford, it makes her absence more inexplicable still. You had a letter from Lady Alverdale so late as this morning, I understand. There was nothing in it to suggest that she might not be here when you arrived, I suppose, nothing that would give us the least inkling as to where she has gone?"

She felt that his eyes were searching her face as he spoke, but she dared not raise her own. His voice alone had power to make her feel that every charge Viva had made against him, both at the restaurant and in her long series of letters, must be false, that it must have been Viva herself who was at fault, her overpowering jealousy which had made their married life unhappy.

She felt that if her eyes met his she would forget every warning impressed upon her and confess her identity, and she kept her eyes steadily downcast, trying to steel herself against the influence of a man's personality.

Viva had tried to prepare her, she remembered. She had told her how persuasive her husband was, and had made her promise not to let his persuasion affect her. How easily she had given the promise, and now, without a word of conscious or intentional persuasion on his part, she found herself taking his side in the quarrel between husband and wife, taking it for granted that Viva must have been always in the wrong.

To remember Viva's pathetic appeal and her promise was to struggle against her weakness, and she was trying hard to forget both her gratitude and admiration for her companion as she answered him:

"Lady Alverdale's letter left me with the firm conviction that she would be here to receive me when I arrived. She promised that she would meet me herself at the station."

He expressed no surprise at this act of friendliness to a nominally strange governess, and asked no question about her engagement. Nor did he ask to see the letter, as he might very naturally have done under the circumstances. It would be impossible for her to show it without admitting her identity, and she was prepared to say that she had destroyed it, since one cannot play a part without making compromises with conscience, but she was relieved to find the untruth uncalled for.

"Then you have no theory to account for the disappearance of my wife?" he asked, and with a mind strained by the effort of posing as an ordinary governess, and yet not minimising her anxiety of Viva's account, Madeline did not realise that the question was a strange one to address to her in her nominal character.

"I am sure that Lady Alverdale has not disappeared—voluntarily," she said, with conviction, "that she would have met me if she had not been—prevented."

She had nerved herself now to lift her eyes and meet his, and she noticed a shadow of annoyance pass across his face.

"Prevented? By whom?" he asked, almost sharply.

Madeline hesitated.

"I understood from Lady Alverdale in our interview," she said, slowly, "that she suspected my predecessor, Madame Etoille, of being evilly disposed towards her. I have been wondering whether Lady Alverdale has been seen since Madame Etoille left the house."

The man surprised her with a short, irritated laugh.

"I beg your pardon," he said, recovering his air of grave politeness, "but the suspicion you hint at is preposterous, as you would realise for yourself if you had ever met Madame Etoille. She is a most matter-of-fact and ordinary lady, with no thought in her head, I am sure, beyond the desire to perform her duties conscientiously."

"Then how could Lady Alverdale entertain such a great feeling of distrust against the governess?" asked Madeline, struggling hard to disbelieve him. "You know that she distrusted her?"

"Oh! yes," he said, and hesitated, the painful shadow on his face again. "My wife's prejudices are not always very reasonable," he added.

"And that is the reason you ignored this one," she said, and the sudden proud coldness in his face reminded her that the speech was altogether unwarrantable.

"There is only one more question that I wished to ask you," he said, ignoring it absolutely. "Lady Alverdale has treated you with considerable confidence. Was there anything in her letter, anything she said in her interview with you, to make you think that she might take her own life?"

Madeline's whole spirit rose against the suggestion. It was the last which should be made by anyone who loved Viva to account for her disappearance. The note of antagonism in her voice required less of an effort as she rejected it warmly, and she found spirit to defend her own theory.

"I would rather think that Lady Alverdale's distrust of this Madame Etoille was not so unreasonable as you imagine," she said. "She believed the governess capable of doing her an injury. Why should that belief be wrong? Evil seems to have happened, and instead of crediting Lady Alverdale with a true premonition, you think that she can have been wicked enough to take her own life. Can you not, at least, have the governess followed and questioned?"

"I could, of course, do so," he answered coldly, "but I am quite sure that it would be useless. If Madame Etoille had known anything of her mistress' disappearance, she would not have left the house without telling us. I am afraid that there is nothing to do but wait—and continue the search."

He spoke with a sigh, and his face, despite its control, showed signs of a deep and wearing anxiety.

He was opening the door for her, and as he did so the tramp of shuffling feet sounded in the corridor outside.

Alverdale's face grew suddenly pale.

"They have found—something," he said, and they went out into the corridor together. A little procession, formed principally of the servants, was just turning into it from the hall, led by Simmonds the butler. In their midst was a fisherman, in his jersey, leading his son, a little shock-headed lad of ten or eleven. He was gripping him by the shoulder, as if afraid that he would escape him.

(Why the boy was brought will be told next week.)

Harry Furniss, the great caricaturist, contributes a breezy article to the August PEARSON'S.

The Day of Most Brave Deeds and Gallant Actions.

A Coastguard Saved Two Lovers from Drowning.

And Firemen have Distinguished themselves on Several Occasions.

CONSIDERING the fact that millions are out seeking pleasure on Bank Holidays in all parts of the United Kingdom, such days are singularly free from serious disaster.

Yet, on the other hand, there is usually a large number of minor mishaps; but, fortunately, even these are rarely attended with loss of life. For, no matter where the mishap may occur, someone is invariably ready to throw his pleasure aside and endanger his life in the effort to save that of another.

Last August Bank Holiday saw a striking example of the gallantry often displayed by those whose business it is to provide pleasure for others. It was when, by the coolness of the captain and crew of the pleasure steamer *Brighton Queen*, the whole of her 200 passengers were safely landed, despite the fact that the vessel was leaking badly.

The *Brighton Queen* had left Brighton in the morning upon a trip to Boulogne, and all had passed satisfactorily till the vessel was just off Hastings on the return journey. Then, while the greater number of her passengers were on deck, enjoying to the full the delightful evening, and while the lights of Hastings could be seen twinkling in the distance, a horribly

harsh grating sound was heard.

What had occurred was apparent instantly to all. The vessel had struck on the rocks that extend for some distance off Hastings. The greatest confusion at once prevailed, people rushed aimlessly about the deck in wild excitement, some took refuge in the boats, and not a few made ready for a plunge over the side.

Only the captain and his men seemed cool and collected. While the crew were doing their best to allay the fears of the passengers, the captain made a thorough investigation. The *Brighton Queen* was found to be taking in water, and, though not to an alarming extent, sufficient to render it advisable that the passengers should be put ashore without delay. This was at last successfully accomplished, boatload after boatload of unnerved holiday-makers being put ashore.

But it was only through the coolness and determined action of the captain and crew that a serious panic was prevented—a panic which

might have ended very disastrously.

Upon the Thames and other popular rivers quite a large number of boating accidents invariably happen on Bank Holidays, yet seldom do the participators experience anything more serious than a ducking. Indeed, only last Easter Monday, more than twenty lives were saved on the Thames alone.

In one case, four lads were rowing from Limehouse to Greenwich, when, through changing seats in mid-stream, their boat suddenly turned turtle. Two of the boys could swim sufficiently to reach the banks, but the others were carried away by the swiftly moving tide.

A seaman on the tug *Wren*, however, witnessed the accident. Quickly throwing off his clothes, he pluckily rescued the exhausted boys just in the nick of time. At Surbiton, too, where some sailing races were in progress, a yacht was capsized in a sudden gust of wind. Fortunately, again, all the occupants were rescued, after an exciting scene and unselfish effort.

Firemen are ever ready for brave deeds, be the day a Bank Holiday or any other. Yet a Bank Holiday often

sees them at their busiest.

Last Boxing Night witnessed a number of heroic actions. At a fire in Colchester Street, Pimlico, a fireman named John Henry Bonner was conspicuously brave. The house was entirely wrapped in flames when it was discovered that an aged lady was still an inmate of one of the upper rooms. To save her seemed impossible, yet Bonner determined to try.

Rushing through the flames, the gallant fireman had to burst open the door, and there on the hearth-rug found the poor suffocated body of Mrs. Bradley, which, after considerable personal risk, he managed to convey into the street. Bonner's plucky efforts were, however, too late, for artificial respiration was tried without result.

Quite as heroic was the endeavour of Private John Slade of the 4th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, for, after saving the lives of several of his relatives and friends, the poor fellow died from the effects of his burns.

The fire occurred at a three-storeyed house in White Horse Street, Stepney, where in the early hours of Boxing morning a number of the tenants were celebrating Christmas in a game of snapdragon.

Somehow, during the game, one of the rooms in the basement caught fire, and though most strenuous efforts were made to overcome the flames, they were without avail. The fire very soon assumed alarming proportions, dense volumes of smoke rushing upstairs and making the escape of those on the top floor a matter of some difficulty. Through the prompt action of Private Slade and a young fellow named Flinn, all the inmates were brought safely into the street except a young man in the top storey, who, finding escape by the staircase impossible, jumped from the window.

In the meantime Slade and Flinn persisted in attempting to save the furniture belonging to their friends in the lower rooms. Time after time they narrowly escaped being caught by the flames, and, indeed, Slade had a terrible experience through falling into a mass of burning woodwork. The poor fellow managed to extricate himself and to make his way outside, but was so fearfully burnt that he died soon after reaching the hospital. Flinn, too, was badly burnt on the face and arms, but fortunately recovered.

The Whit-Monday just passed provided several instances of heroism and pluck. Not the least worthy of notice was the brave attempt of a nurse to save the life of her mistress. The lady in question was a Miss Deykin, daughter of a well-known Birmingham manufacturer, who had been sent into the country in the hope that the quiet, healthful life would

cure her mental affliction.

On the Bank Holiday Miss Deykin was missed, and eventually Nurse Lindsay discovered her charge sitting on a stile near a railway level-crossing. Miss Deykin consented to accompany the nurse, but on the way suddenly turned round and rushed on the railway line. The express from Bristol to Birmingham was seen in the distance. Miss Deykin rushed towards it. Then began a desperate struggle. Nurse Lindsay seized the poor young lady, and the two became locked in a frantic struggle for mastery. The train was now almost upon them. With a wrench Miss Deykin threw herself beneath it, while Nurse Lindsay only narrowly escaped a similar fate. As it was, the brave nurse was struck by the engine, and was picked up in an unconscious condition.

In another case on the same day a couple of lovers, Mr. John Liddle and Miss Hall, were rescued, not a moment too soon, from imminent danger of drowning by the plucky endeavours of some coastguards. It was an experience the lovers will never forget. They had spent a happy day strolling by the sea, and were returning by Marsden Cliffs, about five miles from South Shields, when they saw that the tide was rapidly gaining upon them. It was nearly dusk, and the cliffs were more than 100 feet high. There was no means of escape.

The coastguards in the vicinity, however, heard the lovers' cries for help. With all haste they rushed to the spot provided with cliff ladders. By this time the swiftly-incoming tide was almost at the feet of Mr. Liddle and his sweetheart. Fixing the ladders, two coastguardsmen quickly descended the cliffs' precipitous sides, and then began the most strenuous part of the rescue.

Both Mr. Liddle and Miss Hall were in an exhausted condition, and had to be carried to the top—an extremely hazardous feat, that was only accomplished after innumerable dangers had been encompassed. Within five minutes of their rescue the place where the lovers had stood was covered with seething foam.

ECONOMICAL.

THEY carry economy of labour and material to considerable height in the United States. This beats phonetic printing:

2 lovers sat beneath the shade,
And 1 un2 the other said:
How 14 8 that you be 9
Have smiled upon this suit of mine!

If 5 a heart it palps for you—
Thy voice is mu6 melody—
'Tis 7 to be thy loved 1, 2—
Say, Oy nymph, wilt marry me?
Then lisped she soft, 'Why, 13ly."

"I THOUGHT your wife's name was Elizabeth?"
"So it is."
"Then why do you call her Peggy?"
"Short for Pegasy."
"What has that to do with it?"
"Why, Pegasa is feminine for Pegasus."
"Well?"
"Well, Pegasus is an immortal steed."
"What of that?"
"'Sh! Not so loud. She's in the next room. You see, an immortal steed is an everlasting nag, and there you are."

CARRIE'S CRIME.

An Incident in a F.A.F. Outing.

THE children stood waiting to go into the refreshment tent to tea. One of them carried a baby several sizes smaller than herself.

"Is that little Jimmy?" said another of the children "Oh, he *do* look nice! Little dear!"

Jimmy's temporary mother unwound a little more of the red worsted shawl from his venerable face.

"Yus," she admitted. "'E do, don't 'e? It's the fust time 'e 'ad 'air oil on."

"It do mike an improvement," her friend agreed "Little *dear!*"

"'Ave you seen my brother's new 'at?" inquired another, taking advantage of the sympathetic moment. "'E's 'ad it give 'im."

They had not; and the hat, though a gift which was not likely to escape attention, did not interest the group waiting at the door of the tent. But it sent them off on an emulative comparison of the new stror' 'ats, pinnyfores, and in one case—ostentatiously exhibited—"new pair o' garters," which had been put on to signalise the occasion of the treat. The infant in arms, seeing his claims in danger of being forgotten, made an attempt to assert himself.

"I s'y, Clara Johnson," exclaimed the new pair of garters, "just *look* at your byby! If 'e ain't eatin' 'is ticket."

Half of the ticket was recovered with some difficulty from the baby's mouth—his sister threatening that if he did that again she'd drop him—and his pained remonstrances were stifled by a closer wrapping in the worsted shawl.

The conversation was resumed by a young lady named Carrie, in a terra-cotta frock, who had clearly been making use of the interruption to think of something which should establish an unimpeachable claim to superiority.

"I 'ad a bath all over!" she observed.

There was a pause of envy, perhaps of surprise, and nobody seeming to have anything to say better than *that*, the discussion presently gave place to one upon general topics, and the party trooped in to tea.

When the tea was over, the throng, skilfully evading another attempt to get them to sing grace, went storming out to play.

Later on in the afternoon one group was joined by a new figure—one of the teachers—a pallid, young man with side-whiskers, and the children had stopped dancing. Part of them were gathered round the school-teacher, and part round another smaller figure in a terra-cotta frock.

The teacher held in his hand a bag, which he had apparently just emptied on to the grass. The contents were miscellaneous—two pieces of seed cake, some thick wedges of bread and jam stuck together, some knitting, four pieces of sugar, and half an apple.

"Clara Johnson says these are yours," the young man was saying. "Are they?"

"Yes, sir," said Carrie, beamingly, "thank you, sir."

He raised his voice a little—perhaps the better to create an impression.

"Then such conduct is disgraceful," he said. "What business had you to take them?"

She was still smiling, because she always smiled when spoken to, but her round eyes looked downwards towards her provisions with a sudden misgiving.

"You ought to be ashamed of such gluttony," he continued, aggressively. "I shall confiscate the bag and you will have to leave the ground."

The comprehensive smile still kept its place; but as she caught sight of me she flushed crimson, and a ridiculously big tear rolled unexpectedly towards the corner of her wide mouth.

"I think you had better come with me, Carrie," he said, gravely, and turned away.

She followed obediently, stumbling a little in the effort to keep up with his long legs.

Later on they were speaking to the head teacher. From the colloquy the pallid young man emerged, looking rather yellower than before. The head teacher came across to me.

"Well, what did you say?" I asked.

"I told him a few of my opinions upon injudicious interference."

"But what did you say to Carrie?"

"Of course you know what she wanted that cake for?"

"Well," I assented, "I can't say I should care about seed cake myself, but still——"

"She was begging it for her brother," Clifford went on, "the poor little fellow who didn't get a ticket for the Treat."

"Then that was——"

"She told me," he concluded, "that she didn't have any tea herself, and she thought that would make up for it—'make it all right,' she said."

How many little ones are left behind every time these parties go out with the Fresh Air Fund? Thousands. Won't you do your best to make this number as small as possible—to increase the number of happy ones who can benefit by the F.A.F.? Every ninepence means one less left behind.

A new serial by Henry T. Johnson commences in the Bank Holiday Number of SHORT STORIES.

Mr. P. Doubleyou has a Great Honour Thrust upon him.

"I WANT you to take this letter, and wait for an answer," said the Editor one evening.

"Oh," I replied, "office boy away at a burial?"

"I don't know," he answered huffily. "This note is one which requires the bearer to possess certain intelligence of a higher kind than that of the average office boy. It is to the Duke of Dudesbury, and you will arrive at his mansion in Berkeley Square at ten sharp to-morrow morning, and see his Grace in person."

I spent the greater part of the night reading up "Etiquette for Men," particularly the chapter bearing on deportment before the nobility, and, gorged with information, I donned my best clothes next morning, and chartered a hansom to Berkeley Square.

Walking gingerly up the steps, I inquired of the servant in plain black livery,

"Is the Duke at home?"

He looked very awful, and replied:

"I think not. Your business, please?"

I handed my note, and, closing the door, he bade me wait in the hall.

In a few minutes he returned.

"His Grace will receive Mr. P. Doubleyou.

Please step this way."

Seated at breakfast was a grey-haired gentleman of about fifty-five, alone. He looked at me through a scrutinising pair of eye-glasses, and actually rose from his seat. The book on etiquette said the correct thing to do when being received by your superiors in rank was to make a low bow. I made the lowest I have executed since I used to touch my toes without bending my knees at a gymnasium.

He hadn't quite expected this, apparently, as when I recovered the perpendicular, his Grace was actually extending his hand. I timidly placed my own forward, and allowed it to be shaken. I had read that you should never shake hands unless invited to do so.

"Now, Mr. Doubleyou, will you take some breakfast?"

His Grace pointed to a chair at his side, where to my surprise a plate and knives and forks were already laid. Placing my hat in the hands of the servant, I stuttered:

"Thank you, your—that is—sir" ("your Grace" is only employed by domestics and tradesmen), and sat down.

The Duke then waved away the servant, and affably invited me to have some bacon or fish. I had not expected to be invited to take ambrosia or lotus leaves, it is true, but, certainly, to be invited to take mere bacon by a duke seemed a novel sensation. I thanked him, and he pointed to the sideboard behind him, where two silver dishes containing it stood. They were being kept warm by little spirit stoves. Supposing the Duke intended me to help myself I jumped up. But he had

risen at the same time.

"Let me help you," he said, and with his own ducal fingers he handed me a plate of bacon, which I tackled with a silver handled knife and silver fork.

The Duke took his bacon oddly. Taking a piece of toast he covered it with thick layers of butter. Then he laid on the slice a small rasher of bacon, and ate the same with his hands. Fearing lest I had, by starting with my knife and fork, violated one of the sacred rules of bacon eating amongst the aristocracy, I quietly imitated the duke when he was not looking. When he glanced in my direction, I was eating my bacon on buttered toast with confidence that must have at once stamped me in his eyes as of aristocratic breeding. From that moment he began to talk.

"Do you know," he began, "I like journalists. They are quite the most presumptuous and impudent of mortals."

Evidently this was a "hit" at me. I was about to rise and say hot, burning things in defence of my profession, and denounce him as a member of an oppressive, tyrannic, obsolete feudalism, but the etiquette book said, "Never argue heatedly with those superior to you in rank," so, staying my tongue, I said:

"Yes, sir."

"I remember," he continued, "that when the Duchess and myself travelled in America, one of the journals announced the next morning that 'her Grace had six

vaccination marks on her left arm.'"

I did not quite know whether the Duke meant this as a joke or not. The etiquette book said, "Only laugh when your superior indicates that it is his wish to amuse you." Seeing that the Duke was smiling slightly, and pausing in his remarks, I coughed out a jerky laugh, which I repeated four times. Then, with ungovernable boldness, I blurted out:

"That reminds me of a story that I heard when in America——"

Then I stopped suddenly. The story was one I had heard in New York, and was of an irreverent character. I remembered when the words were out of my mouth that the Duke was a prominent High Churchman. To tell such a story might be vulgarity in itself. The etiquette book said, "On no account relate anecdotes likely to offend a superior's religious or other susceptibilities."

I laughed in a most embarrassed manner. I had made a conspicuous idiot of myself. What would the Duke think of me? I was soon reassured.

The Duke actually laughed, and said:

"Yes. There are many amusing stories told on the other side. It has been cold lately."

A judicious change of subject.

"Yes, sir."

There was another long pause. What on earth could I say? Then I again made a conspicuous fool of myself.

"What, sir," I ventured, "do you think of the Education Bill?"

Now I had done it. Firstly, the book says, "Never open a subject in conversation with a superior. Wait until the topic in indicated." I had not only opened a subject, but a political one. The Duke must be offended this time. And he evidently was.

By his side lay a long silver trumpet. I had noticed it before, and wondered what it was for. He took it and placed it between his lips. Was he about to blow a bugle call to summon his household to forcibly eject me? Or was it etiquette for a duke, when he wished to give a visitor the hint to go, to play a few bars on a trumpet? Trembling with anticipation

I awaited my fate.

Placing the trumpet to the lamp of the spirit-stove on which the tea and coffee stood, the Duke merely blew out the lights, and laid it down again. There was no bugle call, no solo. So far from being offended, he actually talked.

But I will not harrow readers' opinions by telling them what he said. The Duke talked for a quarter of an hour on the subject—on which he was an expert—and by the time he had finished my head ached.

When he had ended his discourse, he rose, and, taking me by the arm, led me to the pictures on the wall.

"That," he said, "is my ancestor, William of Dewdesburie."

It was my duty to be interested. Clutching the Duke by the arm, I said:

"You don't say so?" Then it occurred to me that he might construe this as a reflection on the antiquity of his line, and again I trembled for the awaited snub.

"Yes," was all he answered. "He killed four Roundheads during the Cromwellian wars by a stroke of his spear."

Here was a chance to show admiration. After fishing about for a word, I said:

"Good gracious me!" Then it struck me that this was an idiotic remark,

so I again blushed.

Having shown me the other pictures, the Duke invited me to sit down. He made a few general remarks about the weather, and such like subjects, and paused. How, I wondered, does a duke convey that he has had enough of you—how does he give you your *congé*?

Should I rise? But the etiquette book said, "Do not rise to go unless your superior has conveyed that his pleasure with your company is satisfied." The Duke was yawning. If this was not a hint enough, I do not know what was. Just as I was about to rise to go, a manservant entered.

"The Duchess awaits your Grace."

And my noble host rose, while I did the same.

The etiquette book says, "Always give precedence in entering and leaving a room to your superiors in rank." Accordingly, when we reached the door I stood aside for the Duke to pass out. He, on the other hand, was waving me to go first. I said:

"After you, sir," a silly remark, which reminded me of asking for the salt-cellar at a restaurant. However, we stood bowing to each other for a few seconds, until the Duke made an enormous descent from

his high position.

Seizing me by the arm, we walked out together, his Grace escorting me to the door itself, and tendering his hand to be shaken by me.

"Well, good-bye, Doubleyou," he said. Overcome with embarrassment at this unexpected familiarity, I quite forgot myself. Throwing all etiquette aside, I said:

"Good-bye, Dudesbury," and, suddenly remembering myself, I fled down the steps in a panic, hearing the Duke laughing in a most unnoble fashion.

I afterwards learnt from a Society paragraphist, familiar with the doings of the aristocracy, that the Duke of Dudesbury detests of all things ceremony of any kind. He has never been known to take to a formal person, and likes his friends to treat him as one of themselves.

When I thought of this, it occurred to me that if I had never looked at that etiquette book at all, and had treated the Duke as though he had been an ordinary friend, I might have been more successful in my first meeting with him. Anyhow, any future dealings I may have with the extreme aristocracy will be conducted on different lines.

HOW TO BE A POPULAR BOARDER.

BY ONE WHO KNOWS.

In order to be a genuinely popular person and one who will be esteemed and sought after by other visitors who are staying at a boarding-house by the sea, it is necessary to observe a number of points of behaviour that are far too often completely ignored by those who are at a loss to account for their want of success in gaining the confidence and friendship of the circle of people who are, for the time being, members of the same household.

Here, then, are a few of the observances and traits that it is essential to study closely and practise if a really enjoyable and beneficial holiday is to be spent.

They are suggested in all sincerity by one who has for a number of years been in the habit of staying at boarding-houses, and who has invariably left each separate place with nothing but happy and profitable memories of the visit.

The first, and perhaps the most important, point of all is, *do not be boastful.*

So many men and women arrive at a boarding-house with the avowed intention of creating a false impression. They may be in receipt of a salary or income of two hundred pounds a year, but they speak and act as if that sum of money were the one that they handle monthly!

They talk glibly of drives, and they hint of country-house visits, and shooting and river parties, of well-known persons whom they meet and greet regularly, of their visits to Ascot and all the rest of the smart social gatherings.

At first such men and women are paid every attention to by their fellow boarders, but it is soon discovered that there must be a mistake somewhere, for little side-peeps into their real position and means are quickly made by astute observers and listeners.

Likely enough some small incident at table will serve as a sudden revelation, and the game of brag is at an end.

Such experiences and scenes I have witnessed again and again; the boasters are at once looked down upon, and all in the house are glad when they take their departure.

Another line of conduct that should be carefully avoided is the one that prompts a visitor to be constantly talking of other resorts to the detriment of the one he or she is for the time patronising.

If you go to Margate for a holiday make up your mind to appreciate and enjoy Margate; no useful or profitable purpose is served by saying time after time that Yarmouth, for instance, is a much better place.

Everybody knows that every seaside place has its good points and its drawbacks; no two places are exactly alike in the advantages and disadvantages that they offer.

The bracing quality of the air, the fishing, the band, the pier, and all the other attractions, are not likely to be affected one way or the other by your scorn and contempt.

Do not set yourself up as an authority on every conversational subject raised.

It is a great mistake to try to act the part of teacher to persons who are spending a week or two with rest and change and pleasure in view.

If you know more than anybody else about a subject there are many ways of letting the fact be known without thrusting your knowledge forward in a masterful and rude manner. It is always the modest individual who attracts the really thoughtful and desirable ones among a company.

If you are a musician, or if you possess any other accomplishment, lay yourself out to please by a humble rather than a "superior" manner.

A gift is frequently lessened and lowered in the eyes of others by the possessor of it acting as if no other person on earth were half so clever. Remember that in being asked to preside at the piano you are being paid a compliment.

No matter if you are the best performer in the party, you are, all the same, flattered by the attention of those who are content to be listeners.

Practise self-sacrifice.

If a boating or a driving excursion is being arranged, do not try to get the best seat on the brake or in the boat. Let it be seen that you honour your elders and that you do not think you have a right to a particular place any more than has anyone else.

Treat the plain girl as well as you treat the pretty one, and do not frown if any small action on the part of another does not meet with your entire approval. Recollect that the world is full of people who are as much entitled to their opinion as you are yourself.

Be amiable and cheerful and sympathetic and you will make friends who will contribute to your own enjoyment, who will speedily come to regard you as a good companion, and who will, at the time of parting regret that you are not going their way.

A holiday is very largely made or marred by one's own conduct.

It is, on the face of matters, not reasonable to expect that other folks have left home for the sole purpose of giving you a good time unless you are prepared to do your own share in spreading goodwill and in smoothing away the little ironies of life that crop up at the seaside just in the same familiar way that they do at home.

Harry Furniss' illustrated article on celebrities and their heads is an entertaining feature of the August PEARSON'S.

GREAT NEW SERIES.

The Recollections of a Governess.

As Related to **FERGUS HUME,**

Author of "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab," etc., etc.

MISS MEDWIN'S SILVER.

THERE were six of us—all girls—and father's living was worth only two hundred and fifty a year.

Even though we managed with one servant—an old nurse turned cook who refused wages—it was difficult to feed and clothe nine people on five pounds a week.

As growing girls, we had healthy appetites, and the tradesmen's books *would* mount up, though mother and I did our best to keep them down. Father, taken up with his classics, his parish work, and his church, left everything domestic to mother, and mother consulted me as the eldest of the family.

At two and twenty I knew as much as many a woman of thirty. "What a poor man's wife my Ethel will make," said dear mother fondly, as we settled the weekly accounts.

"I don't want to marry a poor man," said I rather snappily, for the accounts had bothered me. "A rich husband for me."

Mother sighed. "I'm sure I don't know where he's to come from," she said dolefully. "There isn't a marriageable man within miles, except Dr. Damer, and he does not seem inclined to take a wife."

I felt myself blushing at this remark. Dr. Damer had started practice at The Monk's House a year previous, and already had many patients.

He was a general favourite, especially with old Miss Medwin, of The Hall. She called him in on all occasions, although I don't believe she needed medical attendance a bit. But, like Queen Elizabeth, she admired handsome young men, and Dr. Damer was exceedingly good-looking.

We had played tennis and ping-pong together on several occasions, and he made himself so agreeable to me that I thought—well, never mind what I thought. The most prosaic girl will indulge in daydreams, and I'm sure my work-a-day life was hard enough.

"If Dr. Damer marries anyone," I said, "it will be old Miss Medwin. She is quite mad about him, and, being rich, I daresay he will overlook her age."

"Oh, my dear Ethel, I don't think he is mercenary."

"It isn't mercenary to marry money if you're poor. That's what I intend to do, and I can't blame Dr. Damer for having the same sensible idea."

But mother was romantic, and wouldn't hear such talk.

"There can be no happiness without love," she declared firmly. "I should be sorry to see my Ethel make such a marriage."

"Then there's nothing for it but for me to go out as a governess—a nursery governess, I mean. I haven't enough brains to teach all the things people want their children to learn nowadays."

"You could go as a companion, my dear."

"And have to put up with some grumpy old thing, or a sickly, pettish invalid. No, thank you, mother. As a governess I will be independent to a certain extent."

"It's waste of time talking," sighed dear mother. "You know I can't spare you, Ethel."

"You will have to spare me soon, mother. It gets more difficult every day to keep things going. Besides, Sybil is old enough to take my place. And think what a help my salary will be to you and father." Mother began to cry, saying that Sybil was too vain to trouble about household affairs as I did, which was quite true; but, then, Sybil is ever so much prettier than I am.

She entered the room just as mother was wiping her eyes, and asked me if I would walk with her to see Jeggs, the bargeman. His little daughter was ill, and father was sending a jelly to tempt the poor child to eat. I had quite forgotten about Jeggs, but, as the day was fine, and the week's mending was done—mother and I had just finished a pile of stockings—I agreed to go. Sybil wore her best dress, which I thought extravagant on a week-day.

"Jeggs won't pay you any compliments, Sybil," said I, as she admired herself in the nearest looking-glass.

"I dress to please myself," retorted Sybil, who was looking very pretty. "Oh, dear, I am so tired of being poor. What's the use of beauty, when we never see a young man from one year to another?"

"The fairy prince will come some day, my darling," said mother.

She pouted, and made a face. "If he doesn't come soon, I shall be an old maid like Ethel."

I shrugged my shoulders. It was useless rebuking Sybil for her impertinence. She always cried, and crying, she said, brought on her headache. I don't believe she had a headache, but simply invented it to stop all scolding when she did wrong. However, the day was fine, and I felt so anxious for a breath of air that I did not force the quarrel. Sybil could be nasty when she liked. But to punish her, I insisted she should carry the jelly.

It is not a pretty country round Waneleigh, but we were so used to it that we never saw how ugly it really was. In winter the roads were awful with mud and ruts, but now it was summer, and we walked between flowering hedgerows—dryshod and dusty.

On all sides spread the flat, marshy country, with the river Wane winding between slimy banks and acres of reeds. The village was built on a slight rise, but even then the mists rising from the marshes gave the villagers rheumatism. I used to tell Dr. Damer that all he needed in the way of medicine for Waneleigh was Elliman's Embrocation.

It was desolate, too, as there were few people of our standing in the neighbourhood. But a few miles distant, where the country was higher and drier and prettier, many wealthy people lived in fine houses, and Dr. Damer's practice was mostly amongst them. I often wondered why he didn't live at Bargrove, instead of keeping to The Monk's House, which was a dismal place near the river and said to be haunted. But he always replied that he could get over the country rapidly in his motor-car, and liked the quiet of the place. It *was* quiet, goodness knows, and Sybil said so as we walked along.

"I wish father had some rich relatives," she observed discontentedly. "I should so love a season in London."

"Or a trip to the moon," I retorted drily. "One's about as likely as the other. Why don't you marry Dr. Damer, if you want to get away?"

Sybil giggled. "He admires you too much for me to have any chance."

I blushed again, for it had struck me that the doctor was attentive. And I liked him, too—to what extent there is no need to say. But, with such a pretty girl as Sybil at hand, there was no likelihood that he would make me Mrs. Damer, and I said so rather tartly. To my surprise, Sybil grew quite angry.

"I wouldn't marry him if he took me to live in Buckingham Palace," she snapped, twirling her sunshade. "Oh, yes; he's nice enough and good-looking, and makes a fair income, but his friend—that Root man, with his red face and sneering laugh—I hate him!"

I didn't like Mr. Root myself. He was a resident patient, who came down two or three times in the year, and paid well for his board. I didn't like him—he was huge and fat and, I always thought, secretive. I don't know why I should say this, as he was always open and polite with me; but somehow he gave me the impression of being a conspirator. Moreover, he certainly wasn't a gentleman, although he tried to appear one.

"I suppose Dr. Damer puts up with him, for the sake of the money," I suggested. "But, if you married the doctor, you would not need to keep Mr. Root in the house."

"Oh, he's a fixture," cried Sybil, tossing her head, as we came in sight of the barge, "and the doctor actually seems afraid of him. I heard Mr. Root speak so rudely one day that, if I had been a man, I should have knocked him down, the brute!"

"The doctor told me that Mr. Root had been his guardian."

"Oh! Then perhaps that's why he lets the old pig bully him," said Sybil, who does not always express herself elegantly. "But, when you become Mrs. Damer, Ethel, just you turn out Mr. Root."

"What nonsense you talk, Sybil. I am not likely to marry. My fate is to be a governess."

Sybil was about to say something silly, when she caught sight of the doctor's motor-car. No doubt he was seeing Dolly Jeggs.

By this time we were close to the barge, and could hear the throbbing of the engine. Sybil gave me the jelly, as she didn't want to dirty her new dress by going on board, and seated herself in the car. "Don't touch the handle, Sybil," I cried, "it may start."

She nodded. "I'll just sit here and fancy I'm in the park," said she, arranging herself to the best advantage. "You can have Dr. Damer all to yourself and live in The Monk's House with him and his horrid Root friend."

At that moment the doctor appeared and I grew red, for I was sure, from his expression, that he had overheard Sybil's silly speech. I blushed, but Sybil only laughed and stared at Dr. Damer and me, who were looking at one another without speaking.

"One would think you were strangers," she said pointedly.

"Instead of being the best of friends," replied the doctor. "Do you like my motor, Miss Starr?"

"I am only Miss Sybil, doctor. When Ethel marries, I will be Miss Starr."

"Well, you won't have long to wait," said Dr. Damer with such a meaning smile that I turned away to scold Sybil and prevent him seeing my tell-tale cheeks.

When I went down into the stuffy cabin, Jeggs was very civil, though, as a rule, he didn't go out of his way to be polite. Dolly, poor little thing, looked flushed and thin. "It's a touch of the fever, th' doctor ses," remarked Jeggs. "I hope I won't lose her, Miss Ethel."

"Of course, you won't, Jeggs. Dr. Damer is very clever, and my father says the child is to have all the nourishment she requires." I then fed Dolly with the jelly, while Jeggs looked on approvingly.

Shortly Dr. Damer joined us with a message that Sybil, tired of waiting, had gone on to the Hall to see Miss Medwin. I was vexed, but, saying that it didn't matter, went on feeding Dolly, with a look every now and then at the doctor.

He stared at me so persistently, that I began to think Sybil might be right after all. My heart bounded, for I loved Frank Damer. There—the murder's out. I *did* love him, but he didn't know that I did.

"Will Dolly get over this?" I asked for the sake of something to say.

"Certainly, Miss Starr. But she needs a change of air."

"I'll take th' barge t' Harport," muttered Jeggs, looking up. "It's ten mile down stream, doctor, and Dolly 'ull get the sea air."

"And one of those boats that run to France might take you and Dolly across for nothing," I suggested.

"Steamers?" asked Dr. Damer quickly, though why my trite observation should have struck him I don't know.

"Fishin' boats and such like," said Jeggs before I could speak. "There's smugglin' goes on at Harport—French brandy an' laces."

"I should have thought smuggling was a lost art," said the doctor.

"There wos plenty of it when I wos a lad," said Jeggs, who owned to seventy years of age. "Whoy! That Monk's House you lives in was used to hide things in them cellars."

"I haven't examined the cellars," replied Dr. Damer with a shrug, "though there seems to be no end of them, and all are damp and unwholesome. But if there's no smuggling, Jeggs, there are plenty of burglaries. I hear there was a house broken into at Bargrove last night."

"Why, that's the fifth or sixth this year," said I, counting. "Whose house is it this time, Doctor?"

"Mr. Archer's. He's one of my patients. I saw him this morning, as his wife is so upset I had to be called in. She has lost her diamonds, and he a quantity of silver plate. They have got the police in, but nothing can be discovered likely to point to the criminal."

"Jes' like the other 'uns," struck in Jeggs. "Didn't use t' be thieves hereabouts, but it seems as the district's a favourite place with 'em now. It's my opinion 'tis them trippers."

"What trippers?" I asked, putting away the empty plate.

"He means those Whitchapel roughs who come to Speckley," explained the doctor seriously. "I am of that opinion myself. Smart London thieves are not averse to combining business with pleasure."

"I wish they could be caught," said I with a shudder. "It's not pleasant to think that the police are so helpless."

Dr. Damer assented heartily. "You are right, Miss Starr. I was saying the same thing to Root at luncheon. There is nothing particularly valuable at The Monk's House, but I should not like to be burglarized."

"Well," said I, rising to go on deck, for the cabin was unbearable with the heat. "I hope the thieves won't steal Miss Medwin's silver."

"I hope not, Miss Starr. She showed me some a week or two back. I should think it's worth a lot of money."

"Thousands of pounds," I explained, "and she won't have it put in the bank for safe keeping, in spite of all warnings."

"After this last burglary she may see sense," said Dr. Damer as we stood on the deck. "Can I take you back to the rectory?"

He looked at me so anxiously as he spoke that I grew red and awkward like a fool. "No, thank you; I prefer to walk," said I shortly.

Jeggs had remained below, and there was no one in sight. The isolation made the doctor bold, for, before I could quite grasp the situation, he had my hand in his own.

"I couldn't help hearing what your sister said," he whispered, bringing his face close to mine. "Don't you think——"

"No, No! Dr. Damer, how can you?"

"How can't I, you mean," he said. "Ethel, please have me all to yourself and live in The Monk's House."

"With your horrid Root friend?" said I, quoting the end of Sybil's foolish speech.

He grew crimson, and muttered something between his teeth. "Root was my guardian," he explained, "and gives me a great deal of his company for the sake of old times. But he is going to Australia for his health, and we will then have the house to ourselves."

"Cellars and all?"

"Cellars and all," assented Frank. By this time I thought of him as Frank. "We can smuggle, and store brandy and laces if you like."

"Wait! Wait! You go too fast. I haven't said——"

He interrupted me. "But you will, Ethel. I am sure you love me; your eyes tell me so."

"You must have great experience to be able to read a woman's eyes so easily," I said, looking into his bonny face.

"No," he protested earnestly. "You are the first and only woman I ever loved."

Of course, I pretended not to believe him, and all the time was certain that he was speaking the exact truth. "I thought it was Sybil?" I said.

"It is you," he answered, smiling. "It has always been you, and for the last six months my love has been growing deeper and stronger. Do you think I don't know what a good daughter you are, and how you take all the burdens of the rectory on your shoulders?" He took my hands within his own and drew me closer, looking gravely into my eyes. "I want you to share my burdens, Ethel."

"Have you any? I can't believe you have. You look as gay and light-hearted as a king."

"And feel about as gay as your average king does," he retorted. "I don't think monarchs of to-day have the merry times they had in the time of fairy tales. Yes; I have my burdens, but I sha'n't tell you what they are at present."

"Want of money," I suggested, naming the thing which gave me most trouble. But Frank shook his head.

"I am very well off, my dear," said he smiling. "You can have all the money you require."

"And a season in London?" I cried breathlessly.

"A dozen seasons in London," answered Frank, kissing me. "In fact," he added thoughtfully, "it's possible I may set up a practice in town."

"Oh, Frank, when you are such a favourite here?"

"Well, you see, darling, with the exception of my Bargrove patients, I have few who pay me large fees. Most of them are of the Jeggs type. Plenty of gratitude, but little money."

"Gratitude is better than money, Frank."

"Yes; but one can't live on it, or on love either."

"What a rude speech," I pouted, "considering——"

He cut short my remonstrance with a kiss. "Yes, considering," said he, laughing. "Well, dearest, may I take you to the rectory in *your* car?"

"My car—my motor-car?" I said, laughing in my turn. "Since when?"

"The Confessions of a Girl Gambler" start in the current number of SHORT STORIES.

"Since you accepted me," said Frank, handing me in.

"Which I haven't done yet, remember," I retorted gaily.

Frank touched a lever, and away we spun at a most exhilarating speed. It was just like flying through the air. "You *have* accepted me," said Frank quietly, "and we are engaged. But we will keep our engagement secret for a time."

"Won't you let me tell dear mother?"

"No, darling," he said, with a shade passing over his face, "nor the rector, either, for a time. I wish to keep our engagement quiet till——"

"Till when?" I asked, for his sad expression puzzled me.

"Till my guardian goes to Australia. You promise, Ethel?"

Of course, I promised, although I privately thought that Mr. Root was an abominable old tyrant, seeing that Frank actually seemed to be afraid of him.

So Frank drove me home, but refused to come in. I think he was not quite certain that we could keep our secret, seeing that we felt so happy.

Mother had a piece of news for me when I arrived, and met me with open arms. Sybil had brought a note from Miss Medwin offering me an engagement as her companion. She was my god-mother, a stiff, formidable old lady, and not particularly agreeable. But the salary was excellent, and the money was badly needed at the rectory.

"Besides," said dear mother, always sanguine over her chicks, "she might make you her heiress."

"To that famous silver of hers?" said I, laughing. "The thieves will have got it all before I can inherit it."

This led to a long conversation about the burglaries at Bargrove, and father expressed his fears lest the thieves should steal his books. But mother pointed out that books fetched very little, and were difficult to move in bulk, so father became more composed.

Afterwards, we talked over Miss Medwin's offer. I didn't want to leave mother and the girls or the dear, shabby old rectory. But things were so bad, and the bills were getting so large, that it was settled after a lot of discussion that I should go as her companion.

The next day I saw Miss Medwin. We had a talk, which ended in her confirming what she had said in her note. As she wished me to come at once, I left the rectory within the week. Mother wept over me a great deal.

"It's the first bird leaving the nest, my love," said she. "Our home will never be the same," a speech which Sybil thought rude.

Miss Medwin and I got on pretty well, though she did try my temper to the utmost.

The house was beautifully appointed, and everything was of the best. Miss Medwin always dressed for dinner in a silver-grey silk, and wore her diamonds and lace. When thus arrayed and looking at me through her lorgnette, I used to feel quite afraid. She was such a stately old lady, and yet not so very old, as she was only fifty. But that seemed the age of Methuselah to me.

Frank called frequently, and Miss Medwin seemed very fond of him. I never saw her unbend to anyone as she did to Frank. I believe myself that, in spite of her age, she was in love with him, and I believe that I became a little jealous. Frank used to laugh at this, and say that even if Miss Medwin were twice as rich he would not marry her. "I am quite content with my Ethel," said Frank.

But he was very injudicious to his Ethel, and almost made love to me under Miss Medwin's eyes. As she was an extremely sharp old lady, I was always fearful lest our secret should be discovered. But, oddly enough, she never guessed that there was anything serious going on, and merely thought we were companionable, as young people should be.

Twice Frank came to dinner, and on the second occasion Mr. Root came with him. I disliked the man more than ever. I don't know if Frank had told him anything, or if he was sharper than Miss Medwin, but several times I caught him looking at me with a queer expression.

One day Miss Medwin showed me the silver, a lot of which she usually had out when anyone came to dinner. But what she used was nothing to what she had locked up in the strong-room. What with the salvers and candlesticks, and goblets and épergnes, it was quite a sight. The key of the strong-room was kept by the butler, a cross-looking old creature called Merry, but his name was the liveliest thing about him, and I think the care of the silver weighed on his mind.

Miss Medwin also showed me her jewels, of which she had a great many. Then there were rare tapestries and antique furniture, and all manner of valuable things, so that the house was like a museum. I often wondered that, with the Bargrove thieves about, she was so lavish in her display. But Miss Medwin was not at all afraid.

"No thieves would dare to break in here," she said grimly. "There's the gardener, who sleeps in the outhouse, and two grooms in the stables. I can handle a pistol myself," she added, nodding, "so if any burglar came I shouldn't hesitate to shoot him." and I truly believe she would have enjoyed doing so. She had a fiery temper and a fine spirit. And her chance of showing her courage came at last.

One night she was unwell and had retired early. I sat in the drawing-room for some time reading a novel. I fancied I heard a step on the terrace, and went to see if anyone was about. But I saw no one, although the moon was bright, so I fancied my imagination must have misled me. I closed the shutters and went to bed.

It was close on midnight when I awoke, for I heard the stable clock strike. I heard a faint noise like the smashing of glass, then a queer grinding sound. It flashed through my mind that the thieves were in the house, so I slipped on my dressing-gown and ran to the door of Miss Medwin's room. Then I thought it might be a false alarm, and knew that, in such a case, she would only scold me for rousing her. With this in my mind, I stole down the stairs to investigate, and took the poker, in case I met anyone. I did not light the candle, as a bright moon was shining through the painted window on the landing.

I was right about the burglars. As I crept down with bare feet I still heard the grinding noise. It came from the direction of the strong-room. At the end of the narrow passage, which ran past the stairs on the ground floor, I saw a strong light. It came from a dark lantern, as I could smell the burning tin and oil.

Two masked men were in the circle cast by the light. One was kneeling, working at the lock of the door, and the other held the lantern. I must have made some noise, for the man with the lantern started. Then I forgot my caution and my fears, and ran up waving the poker and crying for help. The kneeling man jumped up, and the other shut off the light. But I blocked the passage and they could not pass. Shrieking for help, I threw myself on the stouter of the two, and held him fast.

He swore and caught me by the throat. Then he raised a kind of iron bar he carried, and would have brought it down on my head. But his companion snatched it away with a cry. By this time the alarm bell was ringing in Miss Medwin's room, so the stout man took to his heels. But I clutched the other almost without thinking. His cry told me who he was. "Oh, Frank!" I gasped, and burst into tears.

"Yes," said he with a groan, "I am the thief!"

The men were coming in from the yard, and Miss Medwin was descending the stairs. It seemed certain that Frank would be recognised and arrested, but I could not bear to think that such a disgrace should befall the man I loved. By this time he had taken off the mask. I snatched it from him and thrust it into my pocket.

"Have you any tools?" I asked hastily. He nodded and gave me three. I threw these on the ground near the strong-room door along with the dark lantern, then quickly drew Frank along the passage. "How did you enter?" I whispered. "Show me. I can save you."

"You can't," he groaned, and I saw that his face was white and drawn in the moonlight. "It has come at last. I always knew it would——"

But I cut him short, as Miss Medwin was just turning the landing and the grooms were entering the passage at the back. "Show me! Show me!" I insisted. "Quick, for your own sake, if not for mine!"

Frank gave a kind of groan and ran across the front hall to enter the morning-room. The window was open, for the glass had been cut and the hasp slipped back. I made him get out on to the terrace, and then began to talk loudly.

"Oh, Mr. Damer!" I cried to attract attention, "how lucky you have come. Thieves have been here. Where is the man, Miss Medwin?"

As I shouted, Frank guessed how I intended to save him, and entered into the spirit of the thing. He stepped into the room as Miss Medwin, with the grooms at her heels, ran in. "Where are they?" she cried, coming up and looking from Frank to me.

"A man ran down the avenue," explained Frank hastily. "I only hope he won't bolt with my motor-car. I'll see!"

He would have gone, but Miss Medwin stopped him. "Stay here, Mr. Damer," she said imperiously. "You two men run down and catch the blackguard if you can, James!" This was to the gardener, who entered with a lamp. "See if the strong-room is safe. Put the light on the table. Now then, Mr. Damer?"

"I was out seeing a patient," said Frank, when Miss Medwin's orders had been obeyed, "and in passing the lodge gates I saw two men run up the avenue. Remembering the Bargrove burglaries, I left my car on the road, and came to offer help. This window was broken and open. Miss Starr appeared——"

"I just followed the two men from the strong-room," I explained, and related how I had heard a noise and had given the alarm. Miss Medwin believed the story of Frank, or, at least, appeared to do so.

"I am much obliged to you, Ethel, and to you, Mr. Damer," she said in her grim way. "I'll see to the strong-room myself. Wait here!" and she left the room briskly, closing the door after her.

"Does she believe?" asked Frank hoarsely.

"I can't say. We must wait and see. Oh, Frank!"

"For Heaven's sake don't cry, my darling. I'm not worth it."

"Frank, is it you who robbed these houses?" I asked.

"I and Root. It was he who led me into it. Dear—God forgive me!" he said with a groan. "I have no right to call you that now, Ethel!" With a haggard face, he caught my two hands and held them convulsively to his breast. "Root was my guardian, and when I was a lad he managed to entangle me in some thievish affair. Since then he has had a hold over me, and always threatened to denounce me if I did not assist him. This was to be our last job, and then he was going to Australia to enjoy his gains. I implored him not to rob this house, knowing you were here. But he insisted."

Kneeling at his feet, with his shameful face hidden in my lap, Frank told me all rapidly. He had been left by his father to the guardianship of Root, who was supposed to be a decent man and wealthy. But he had always been a burglar, and his money came from thieving.

When Frank was young and with a pliant mind, Root had inveigled him into committing a robbery in such a way that Frank did not know the extent of his wrong-doing until it was too late. Once Root obtained this hold over him, he forced the poor lad to do his horrible will by threats of exposure. Frank had fought desperately. Twice he had fled, but Root had always found him out and brought him back. They had made so much money by their robberies of late years that Root arranged to go to Australia, and promised to release his hold on the young man he had ruined.

"And then I intended to marry you and to repent," wailed Frank, clutching my dressing-gown; "but it's too late now. I must fly. Root is certain to denounce me to the police by letter as soon as he has made himself safe, and I don't know how to get out of the country."

I thought for a moment. Wicked as he was, I could see that there was some excuse for his evil. He had been terrorised by the elder man, and had not possessed sufficient courage to release himself after the first false step. I made up my mind that he should have a chance of escape and repentance. "Go down to Jeggs' barge," I said hastily. "He is taking her to Harport to-morrow morning, and will give you a passage. Make some excuse. Then you can get on board one of those smuggling fishing-boats and cross to France."

"And you, Ethel, you?"

"I must give you up," said I in low tones, and with tears streaming down my face. "Oh, God! how terrible all this is."

"Give him up to the police," said a harsh voice at the door.

I turned, and Frank jumped up. Miss Medwin, as pale as I was, stood at the door, eyeing the wretched man in a pitiless manner. "I have been listening," she said in her strong voice. "I thought it strange you should have been so opportunely on the spot, and I saw the look that girl gave you. Pretending to go to the strong-room, I waited on the other side of the door, and I have heard all. I know you now—you thief," she said bitterly. "You miserable hound!"

Frank groaned and stood silent, his eyes on the ground. I raised my hand. "If you have heard all," I said in low tones, "you know how he was forced into this life."

"I know that he loves you, and that he is engaged to you," she flashed out with a movement of her hand to her heart. "You Judas!" she added bitterly to Frank and with a withering glance.

I guessed her feelings. Angry and disgusted as she was to find that Frank was a thief, it was her discovery that he loved me which caused her to speak thus. She would have forgiven his crime, under the circumstances, which he had explained to me. What she could not forgive was his love for me. Frank guessed this as I did, and did not attempt to defend himself. "I am in your power," he said hoarsely; "do what you will."

"I could give you up to the police," she said in a hard voice, which trembled in spite of her self-control. "Oh, you pitiful coward, to let me think you an honourable man and to betray me in this way. Had you only known how I loved you—yes, old as I am—I loved you! I would have married you. I would have given you all that you came here to steal. But this girl, you—you love her?"

"With all my heart and soul," said Frank in low tones. "But she despises me, as she should."

"Frank, Frank, I do not!" and I drew closer to him.

Miss Medwin sprang forward and dragged me away. "Not before my eyes, girl!" she said savagely. "I might—I might"—she stopped and crushed down an emotion which would have robbed her of self-control. When she spoke again, her voice was perfectly calm. "Ethel," she said, "I intended to make you my heiress. I will do so now, if you will call for assistance and have that man arrested."

"No," I cried, roused in my turn, "he has suffered enough. I don't defend him, but—oh!"—I broke off in an agony of grief—"let him go! Let him go! Give him another chance."

She laughed in a dreary manner. "Let him go! Why should I let him go—the thief? Not of gold or silver or jewels, but of my heart, my broken heart," and she struck her bosom frantically. "Choose, Ethel. If that man goes free, you lose my money. I offer you a fortune, or his liberty. You can take your choice."

"I have taken it. I choose his liberty. I have your promise."

"At the cost of five thousand a year," she sneered.

"No, no, Ethel!" cried Frank, almost breaking down. "I am not worth it. Let me be punished as I deserve to be. Take the money, and——"

"I shall not. Go, run to the barge. Before dawn you will be at Harport, and then can cross to France. Go, go!" and I pushed him towards the window. Frank climbed out and walked rapidly down the avenue. The two men came back, and reported that the thief had gone off with Dr. Damer's motor-car, but no one suspected Frank's complicity in the robbery.

"The man Root has escaped," Miss Medwin told me next morning. "I have just heard from the police. He drove the motor to Warrington Railway Station and caught the midnight express. He has vanished to London and cannot be traced. I sincerely hope he will never be found. Probably he will go to Australia with his ill-gotten gains. As to the man Damer——"

"Don't!" I said faintly, and held up my hand.

She caught me fiercely by the wrist. "Do you think I am not suffering?" she said harshly. "Look at my face; feel my heart; I tell you, girl, I am in agony. What matter if he was a thief—I love him still. And you—you chit of a girl, took his heart from me. Well," she burst out into mocking laughter more painful to hear than sobbing, "he has cost you five thousand a year."

"He is worth it," said I boldly. "He is more sinned against than sinning!"

"He was a moral coward," she retorted. "He should have defied that man from the beginning and——"

"A boy in his teens," I interrupted.

She threw out her hands towards me with a gesture full of aversion.

"Go! Go!" she cried. "I hate the sight of your face! Go home to your mother. I will tell the needful lies. She need never know."

And my mother never did know, nor did anyone else learn the terrible truth. I learnt afterwards that Frank had returned to The Monk's House and had told his servant that he was called to Harport. He packed up a few things and went down the river in the barge. Later, he crossed to France. His house and the furniture were sold, as he left instructions with his lawyer that such should be done. No goods were found in the cellars, as Root had cleaned them out. Therefore it was never known that Dr. Damer and his resident patient were thieves.

I could not stop at the rectory after my trouble, and procured my first engagement as a governess through an agency. On the very day I departed for my first situation, I received a note from Frank. This I read in the train when I was feeling lonely and sad. He swore always to love and cherish my memory, and added that he was going to America, there to lead a new life and redeem his years of evil. "And some day," he ended, "when I have blotted out the past, I will return to ask for your forgiveness."

(A further instalment will appear next week.)

Just at this season, when yachting is the order of the day, the article on that subject in the August PEARSON'S will appeal to everyone

Automatons that have Puzzled Humans.

"Psycho" could Play Whist.

And "Zoe" was able to Draw.

THE idea of "Phroso," the life-sized automaton, was probably borrowed from the so-called "mechanical cornet player" which was exhibited in Paris during the last great exhibition, and which was itself again in part a duplication of Mr. Maskelyne's "Fanfare."

Originally the French "musician" was a doll pure and simple, the music, as in the case of "Fanfare," emanating from a living instrumentalist concealed beneath the stage. A long, flexible tube conveyed the sound to the cornet held by the figure, and the latter's fingers were manipulated at the same time by means of concealed wires.

On some evenings, however, towards the end of the run of the entertainment, a man, who cleverly simulated all the stilted "dolliness" of the automaton, was substituted in its place. This, of course, tended to heighten the mystery; for the sham doll took care to make, now and again, some slight movement having an air of spontaneity that was necessarily

foreign to the real one.

As a matter of fact genuine automatons are not often seen in connection with entertainments of this description. The figures are usually more or less cleverly-designed dolls, whose movements are controlled by exterior influence. Still, there have been some of these dolls even that have mystified the world—until the secret of their construction and manipulation has leaked out.

There was, for instance, "Psycho," the mechanical whist-player, exhibited at the Egyptian Hall, London, in 1875.

"Psycho," as originally shown, was an Oriental figure, about half life-size. It sat cross-legged on a box, which was supported on a single cylinder of clear glass. This latter, again, rested upon a small stool with solid wooden legs. Members of the audience were admitted upon the stage while the figure was giving its performance, which consisted in playing a very excellent game of whist with the first chance comer who chose to volunteer. It also, at a later period of its career, performed a number of complicated

arithmetical calculations each evening.

What exactly were the motive power and the mechanical arrangements which produced these effects, or how they were applied, has never even yet been fully made public; although Mr. Maskelyne once admitted, in an unwonted burst of confidence, that the doll's movements were controlled by a combination of clockwork, electricity, and compressed air.

Of course, "Psycho" produced a whole crop of imitations, but none were so neat or so mysterious as the original. Perhaps the best was Professor Pepper's card-playing doll "Scynthia." But even this one went wrong not infrequently, and no wonder, seeing that it depended for its successful working on a whole host of wheels, springs, levers, and other elaborate mechanical devices, the failure of any one of which meant derangement of the whole.

"Hankey," another imitation, consisted of the figure of a man, seated on an octagonal-shaped box, in which a boy was concealed, who worked the arms and head. The remarkable thing about this exhibit was not so much the so-called "automaton" itself, which was, indeed, of somewhat clumsy construction, as the marvellous whist-playing

abilities of the hidden lad.

"Zoe," another of Mr. Maskelyne's trick figures, gave rise to perhaps even more mystification and discussion than did "Psycho." It was a nearly life-size but very light doll, seated upon a skeleton stand. Before it was placed a drawing-board, upon which it wrote figures and drew portraits of celebrities in obedience to requests from the audience. To all appearance there was no motive power off the stage. The movements of the figure and its skill seemed to be entirely spontaneous.

In reality, however, they were due to an exceedingly simple mechanical device. A thin steel rod ran through the pedestal of the seat upon which the figure was fixed, and this connected beneath the stage with a duplicate "Zoe," in every respect identical, even to the pencil and the drawing-board, with the "Zoe" above.

The doll which was out of sight was manipulated by an attendant who was also an artist, and its every movement was faithfully transmitted, by the agency of the steel rod mentioned above, to the doll which appeared on the stage.

This sounds simple enough when it is explained. But the elucidation of the mystery long baffled many of the keenest brains and smartest intellects.

It should perhaps be added that as the figure was brought on the stage in full view of the audience, and then fixed in its seat, all suspicion of complicity with persons below was naturally removed. The rod was, however, pushed upwards at the instant the figure was seated in its place by the exhibitor, and was made fast by the latter at the same moment of time.

Of true automatons, perhaps M. Vaucanson's two admirable figures, the flute player and the tambourine player, were among the most remarkable. Both were publicly exhibited, and caused an immense sensation, which, in turn, led to the construction by other ingenious and money-loving individuals of similar mechanical life-size "dolls."

Knauss, for example, made and exhibited in Vienna and elsewhere an automaton that wrote. The two Drozes—father and son—constructed an entire orchestra of automatons, while Fabermann made one fitted with mechanism which successfully simulated the human voice.

Later on a similar "talking automaton" was shown in London, and drew immense crowds, as did also the "Anthropoglossus," exhibited at St. James's Hall in July, 1864. This latter, however, was afterwards shown to be a clever fraud, the sounds produced

being due to ventriloquism.

Even cleverer in its methods of construction and manipulation, but also, speaking strictly, a "fraud," was Baron Kempelen's world-famous "automatic" chess-player.

Although for many years this remarkable doll astonished and puzzled Europe, giving rise to the wildest conjectures and theories, it is now known that its movements were all the time and always due entirely to the agency of a person concealed within the box on which it sat.

This person was at first an old Polish soldier, named Worousky, who had lost both legs in battle; and as he was furnished with a pair of excellent imitations whenever he appeared in public, and as it was known that no child or dwarf travelled with Kempelen's company, suspicion that any person could be hidden inside or behind the complicated mass of mechanism which was all that could be seen when the box was opened to view was entirely allayed.

Kempelen's original model was accidentally destroyed by fire in 1854, but several others, constructed on similar principles, were quickly in the field. Of these, one made by a man named Hooper was shown under the name of "Ajeeb" at the Crystal Palace soon after it was first opened, and attracted for a time as much attention, and aroused as intense a curiosity, as did the original.

Later still appeared Gumpel's chess-playing figure "Mephisto." There was absolutely no space whatever within or about this extraordinary "doll" for the secretion of a living player; but it very quickly leaked out that the moving arm and gripping finger and thumb of the figure were worked from beneath the stage by an ingenious arrangement of wires, rods, and levers.

"AND is he married yet?"

"No, bedad!—and a mighty good thing it is for his wife!"

EDYTH: "Is it true that you are engaged to Jack?"

Mayme: "Yes; but you are not to mention it. I'm not quite sure that Jack knows it as yet."

JIM: "That man destroyed all my married happiness."

Jam: "What! You don't mean to say——"

Jim: "I do; he married our cook!"

PAPA: "And do you think for one moment that that clerk of mine was in a position to propose to you?"

Daughter: "Why, certainly, papa; he was on his knees."

GENTLEMAN (to house agent): "No, the house won't do. I don't like the drain."

House Agent: "Drain, sir? Why, the sanitary arrangements are perfect."

Gentleman: "I mean the drain on my purse; the rent's too high."

ONCE more the modern Sherlock stepped forward and announced that he had been successful.

"Your daughter is in love," he said.

"How did you find that out?" asked the puzzled father. "I am sure you have not seen her with any young man."

"No, but when she passed the old locksmith she laughed."

"YOU MUSTN'T" ON THE 'TIMES.'

Words and Phrases on the Black List of our Leading Daily.

NEARLY every newspaper has a code of customs peculiar to itself. What would be regarded as correct grammar, spelling, or phrasing on one journal would be considered almost felony on another.

The TIMES is so strict on the point that the sub-editors each possess a copy of a dictionary published by that journal for the sole use of its own staff. The reporter's question, therefore, is not "How ought that word to be spelt, or that sentence constructed?" but "How do *we* do it on the TIMES?"

Here are a few things which the TIMES says you mustn't do:

Firstly, grammar must be, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion. What passes in ordinary conversation or even literary work will not necessarily do on the TIMES. We often start a sentence "Under the circumstances," and think we are talking or writing the purest English. It is not so, however, according to our leading journal. "In the circumstances" is, according to that authority, the one and only permissible phrase.

Let us take an ordinary sentence, as it might be written by an amateur journalist, and see how it would be treated by the ruthless blue pencil of a TIMES sub-editor. Suppose he were reporting a murder trial, he might quite easily write something like the following:

"Witness commenced by saying he had met deceased previous to going to Williams'."

It is not a pretty sentence, certainly, but most of us would read it without seeing anything glaringly wrong.

A TIMES sub-editor, however, would probably faint at such a passage. It contains no fewer than seven blunders, from his standpoint. To begin with, the TIMES never refers to "witness," but always "the witness." Secondly, it never uses the word "commence," but always "begin." "By saying he had" contains one omission—the word "that." "Deceased" is on the TIMES Black List, for if reference is made to a person who has died, he is always mentioned as "the late Mr. Blank."

"Previous to" is wrong. On the TIMES it must either be "previously to" or simply "before"—"previous to" being incorrect. Then "to going" is colloquial, but does not do for the TIMES. You must say "to his going." Finally, "Williams'" would not be printed, as in using the possessive of a word ending in "s" the TIMES always adds another "s"—thus: "Williams's."

When that sentence appeared in type it would read:

"*The* witness *began* by saying *that* he had met *the late Mr. Dash* previously to *his* going to Williams's." (The italics show where the corrections should have been made.)

If a reporter were at a public meeting, and the speaker's remarks were received by clapping of hands, he would, if inexperienced on the TIMES, write "Applause" in brackets at the end of the sentence. In type it would have been altered to "Cheers." "Applause" is on the TIMES Black List, the word "Cheers" being always employed in reporting Parliamentary speeches. Though the Member of Parliament's token of approval is never a "cheer" as we know it, the TIMES uses that word throughout the paper, so as to avoid confusing the printer, and never on any account "Applause."

Another peculiarity of TIMES Parliamentary reporting is in the use of the first and third person. An ordinary speech by a private member or lesser Minister will be reported in the third person, thus: "Mr. Brown said he had listened to the hon. member," and so on. Had it been Mr. Balfour, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Lansdowne, or even Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, it would be in the first person.

In writing of a Blue Book, most of us use capital initials in both words. The TIMES does so only in the case of "Blue." Another curious spelling habit is "parcimony" instead of "parsimony."

The word "I," in any other connection than the reporting of a remark as uttered by a given person, is "Black-listed." A critic reviewing a play, book, or composition must never introduce himself, but write always in an "impersonal" sense. The idea is, of course, that when the TIMES speaks, it is not any particular individual, but an organised body of thought.

One more peculiarity—recently added—of this famous journal might be cited. No free seats are allowed to be accepted for any functions whatever. When the TIMES critic attends a first-night or other performance, his seat has been duly paid for. This was done as a result of a recent controversy between the TIMES critic and a well-known playwright.

Lady readers will find useful hints as to the renovation of their clothes in the August LADY'S MAGAZINE.

AMBITION'S SLAVE.

By FRED. M. WHITE, Author of "Who Killed James Trent?"

CHAPTER FIFTY.

Blood Money.

DINNER was over at length, and the house party scattered about. Kit Clive had come down by a late train, and was in the library transacting some business with Minter. He had resigned his position as private secretary; in a day or two he would be free of the City for all time. Maude was sitting in the outer hall amongst the flowers, with the door open, enjoying the evening breeze. There was a trying interview before her, and she was trying to brace up her nerves for the ordeal. Kit, passing out on his way to the stables, found her.

"This is a bit of luck for me," he said, cheerfully. "I have a great deal to say to you, Maude."

"Not now," Maude said hastily. "Presently, Kit. I shall be in the small dining-room in an hour's time, but, first, I have something serious to say to Mr. Desborough. Kit, he wants me to fix the day."

Kit drew a long breath, and his face grew hard.

"You are not to do that," he said. "On no account let him persuade you to do that until you have seen me again. I don't know, I may be wrong, but I fancy that I can see the way clear now. I won't give you up, darling; you belong to me. I could never be happy without you."

He caught Maude's hand passionately and carried it to his lips. A shadow fell across the hall, and Desborough stood there, with eyes full of cold contempt.

"If I am not intruding," he said, "I should like to have a word with you, Maude. In fact, I am under the impression that you asked me here for that purpose."

No colour stained Maude's cheeks; she pointed quite coolly to the chair by her side. Kit moved away, and his figure was lost in the darkness.

"How long is that going on?" Desborough asked. "If you have any self-respect——"

"I am not going to accept any lessons in self-respect from you," Maude said. "I love that man with my whole heart and soul, and he loves me. Do you hear that?"

"I hear it fast enough. But I shall soon teach you to forget it."

"You never will. Oh, I shall not disgrace you; the tongue of scandal will never touch me. And when Society finds that you have not married a rich woman, even you will be free from the accusation of a mercenary marriage."

"What do you mean by that? The fortune that you inherited under the will—but that is nonsense."

"It is not nonsense at all. I am worth about £20,000 at the outside, and that sum is represented by my jewels. Do you know how my money is invested?"

"I never inquired. As your trustees are thorough men of business, I presume——"

"My trustees had no option. When my father died the property of the Certified Company was a valuable one. Now, thanks to the manipulations of men of the Minter type, it may be worth millions, or it may be worth nothing. All my money is invested in Certified Shares."

Desborough fairly staggered under the blow. Surely Fate had never placed a man in such a cruel position. If he won his case, as he most assuredly would have done had not Minter got him in his grip, Certified Shares would have been worth more than ever. He had quite forgotten for a moment that the late Mr. Beaumont had practically been the Certified Company in his lifetime.

"Why didn't you tell me this before?" he asked, hoarsely.

"For the simple reason that I did not know," Maude replied. "It is only quite lately that I have been learning something about business. I had some idea of setting my affairs in order, and I wrote to the solicitor to my trustees. He tells me that I have everything in that company."

Desborough suppressed a groan. He had practically made up his mind to let things go, and do as Minter wished. As the husband of Maude he could afford to let the world pass, but that did not free him from Minter's hard grip. He liked Maude, he wanted a rich wife, but he loved his ambition more than either. If he defied Minter, the latter would speak, and he would be ruined. Once the bitter truth was spoken, not all the money in the world would ever set him on his political pedestal again. And all this time, without knowing it, he had been shaping a course deliberately calculated to deprive Maude of what he most valued—her money. And he could see no way out of it.

If he defied Minter, he would win his case, he would have a rich and lovely wife. But then Minter would drive him out of the House of Commons without scruple or hesitation. And if he let things go, and Minter came out of the trial with flying colours, Maude would be a pauper.

"You seem to take it very coolly," he said, bitterly. "If you valued your good future——"

"Oh, I do. From the bottom of my heart I want Mr. Minter to win. In that case you will have no further use for me; you will have degraded yourself in my eyes, and played the scoundrel for nothing. Every time you meet me you will think that somebody knows you for what you are."

"If your money is gone"—Desborough was stung into retort—"you are not likely to meet me in——"

"In Society. You are forgetting. I shall not mind my money, it will not make the smallest difference to me. You see I shall be free to marry the man I love, and you know he is a rich man. Kit Clive has far more than we shall ever need, and he will be glad to take me as I am. On the whole, I shall not be sorry to see Mr. Minter get the best of that case."

Desborough made no reply for some little time, and Maude sat there regarding him with a smile of dry contempt. Strong, clever man as he was, Desborough was hopelessly beaten and overcome. Rack his brains as he might, he could see no way out of the difficulty. He was between Minter and the deep sea of political oblivion. If Maude's money had been in his hands . . . . Could she sell out?

But Maude could do nothing of the kind, at least not until a certain date. Her father had left her everything, with a stipulation that if the shares in the company realised a certain price the surplus was to go to her sister Alice, or any representatives she left behind her. It sounded sentimental, but there it was.

"But your sister is dead," Desborough said.

Maude fought her anger down. Was this man utterly shameless?

"That has to be proved," she said. "It will be a long and expensive business, the lawyers tell me. If we win our case those shares will bound up, they say, and Alice, if she is alive, would be entitled to something like £60,000. I'm told the Court would hesitate to hand that over to me unless my proofs of Alice's death were strong."

As a lawyer, Desborough had to admit the soundness of this reasoning. Both Alice Beaumont and her husband might have survived the shipwreck; they might be close at hand at the present time. A dull red flushed into the barrister's face as he realised how near they were. What his feelings would have been had he known to what extent Maude shared his knowledge can only be guessed.

Maude rose; she felt it impossible to sit there any longer with that calculating scoundrel without betraying herself.

"It is useless to stay here any longer," she said. "It seems to me that I have given you plenty of food for reflection. I shall be glad to know in a day or two what you propose to do. Or shall we go to Lady Mary and tell her the date fixed for our marriage?"

The bitter gibe went home. Desborough winced before it. Hard rascal as he was, he was not quite devoid of feeling. Maude pressed her advantage.

"I am not without information," she said. "I know, for instance, that Mr. Minter is terribly in want of ready-money. It seems to be a condition of affairs common to the modern millionaire. Let me try and get you out of the depths of despair into which you have fallen. I can command money; I can raise £20,000 on my jewels. I'll go to Minter and ask him what he will take for those papers; I'll offer to buy them. He shall be paid money down. And then you will be free to play the man again. No doubt it will be a peculiar sensation, but I should say a pleasing one."

Desborough said nothing, a ray of hope lighted up his dark soul. He made some protest, but there was no heartiness or sincerity about it.

"Minter would not part with the papers," he said, feebly. "Besides I could not permit you to——"

"Mere hollow words. I can see that you are glad of the suggestion. To-morrow, to-night, if I get the chance, I will do this thing for you, for the sake of your past, for the sake of the mother who is so proud of you. Try and hold up your head once more, look me in the face. For even you are not likely to reach a greater depth of degradation than this."

Maude moved away with her head in the air and the light shining on her white, beautiful face.

CHAPTER FIFTY-ONE.

Minter is Candid.

THE special editions of the evening papers arrived at Marvyn Chase about ten o'clock. On the whole, Minter had no cause to be dissatisfied. Once more he had become a central figure. His portrait, vilely executed and smudgily printed, appeared in two of the flimsy sheets, vague rumours of the good time coming for Certified shareholders filled columns. One contemporary, bolder than the rest, had an interview with Baron Kinski telegraphed from New York. On the whole, Mellor had done his work well, Minter thought.

By one bold stroke his tarnished credit had been established on a higher pinnacle than ever! Kinski and Minter and Murdock could move financial mountains. At the end of a week Minter could see his way to the best part of a million of money. And yet he was at his wits' ends for a few thousand pounds in ready cash. It has happened to millionaires before.

But, on the whole, he had every cause to be satisfied. There were terrible dangers ahead, but Minter could make light of them for the present. His smile was large and engaging as Maude came up to him as he was leaving the drawing-room.

"Can I have a little conversation with you?" she asked.

"Why not?" Minter replied. He had a fine admiration for Maude, whose beauty and intelligence had made a deep impression on him. If he could have looked into the depths of the girl's mind he would have been less florid and more cautious. That she was going to make use of him he never imagined for a moment. But Maude saw her way clear.

"Come along to my room," Minter said in great good-humour. "Murdock has gone to bed. He is one of the class that takes no liquor, and can't do with only eight hours' sleep. Good thing for Murdock that he happened to be the son of his father—he would never have made his own fortune. And now, what is it I can do for you?"

Maude seated herself before the wood fire thoughtfully, for the night had turned chilly. The flickering blaze fell on the lovely, sensitive face, on the shimmering drapery, and the slender hands. She formed a beautiful picture that compelled Minter's admiration.

"I want some information," she said. "Do you know that all my money is in Certified Shares?"

Minter nodded. There was very little he did not know upon that subject.

"My father practically made that company," she said. "After he died you got hold of it; at least, you obtained command of enough shares to direct its policy. Then came the business of those smuggled arms. If the case goes for Mackness what happens?"

"I'll tell you. It's a treat to talk to an intelligent woman like yourself. The Mackness action is not a large one, but if it wins it opens the door to others. Not that I care so much as I did, because before the week is out the shares will be double their present value."

"And how is that going to be brought about?"

"I'll tell you. I'll be perfectly candid. Kinski and Murdock have joined me in the business. The great public will naturally conclude that we must have a good thing, and they'll jump for Certified Shares. They will be up points by Wednesday. If you can get your trustee to sell out then, you'll make more than £100,000. That's what I'm going to do."

Maude started at the cool audacity of the speaker.

"But that sounds very like a swindle," she said.

"Not a bit of it. It's only the smarties who will get bitten. If we win our case the enhanced value of Certified Shares will be permanent. At the bottom, it is a magnificent property."

"And if you lose your case, Mr. Minter?"

"Then there will be a big slump. I shall sell and take my profit, and I shall quietly buy back the depreciated shares, because, as I said before, the property is a sound one. We shall appeal and fight and argue till the holders of shares will be glad to get rid of them."

"And that is what you call commercial morality?" Maude cried, scornfully.

Minter laughed. He had been candid, very candid indeed. He did not usually go so far as this with anybody, but he'd had a trying day in which ruin and disaster and dishonour had been suddenly turned into smiling prosperity. And he had taken a great deal of wine at dinner.

"It's business," he said. "I've shown you how to make a fortune, and you should be grateful. And, unless I am greatly mistaken, you'll take my advice."

"Yes," Maude said, with a curious thrill in her voice. "I shall see that my solicitors take your advice. From what you say, you stand on velvet either way. But, suppose that the missing witness comes forward and goes into the box!"

Minter's heavy face clouded, and a dark gleam came into his eyes.

"My wings would be clipped," he said. "I could do no more than make my pile over the shares. If Price gave evidence, I should have to drop Certifieds at once. Between ourselves, my dear young lady, Price has a very queer story to tell."

"And so the Certified Company would go into honest ways again, as it did in my father's time?"

"Well, that's rather a strong way to put it," Minter said, with a wry face, "but it's about true. Not that there is the slightest chance of Price turning up again."

Maude bent down and restored a fallen log to the fire. She was fearful lest Minter should see the fierce joy blazing on her face. The man had told her everything that she positively wanted to know. Better still, he knew nothing of the tremendous weapon he was placing in Maude's hands. She would free herself yet; she would see the end of Desborough's hated attention, and she would lay her head on Kit's breast and be happy.

"Then I should very much like Price to turn up," she said.

"Why? You have nothing to gain by it."

"Personally, perhaps not. But it would cut the knot of the hateful business. It would save thousands of poor creatures from ruin in the long run. It is men like you who are the bane of modern industry. You cannot do anything for yourselves, you invent nothing, you leave nothing better than you find it. You have not even the possession of intellect. You are the pests of Society."

Maude flashed out suddenly, not without bitter self-contempt behind her anger. It galled her that she had to make more or less of a friend of this man. It did not occur to her that he was giving her all this information by way of bribing her to keep silence over the visit of Amy Rayne to Marvyn Chase. She only knew that she was paltering with a scoundrel for her own ends.

"Are we as bad as all that?" Minter asked, with a smile.

"Indeed you are. Your whole stock-in-trade is cunning and audacity. And you have no feelings. For your own ends you have gone far to ruin Clifford Desborough's career. You are compelling him to do a dishonourable action, the trap you deliberately laid——"

"Draw it mild," Minter blustered. "I'm not going to feel any remorse for him! There are some men who go through the world honestly, because it has never paid them to be otherwise. Some men die honest, because they are never tempted. Up to now Desborough has been one of them. But he's bad to the core; don't you know that he is as bad as they make 'em?"

Maude looked down without a reply. She knew perfectly well that he was telling the truth. Desborough was bad to the core, but Maude was going to make an effort to save him. It would be a costly business, but it would get her out of this hateful tangle, and she would have paid a heavy sum for that. If Minter refused, her scheme would have to go on.

"All the same, I should like to see Mr. Desborough free," she said. "If I could only handle those papers that you possess he would be free enough."

"That's right," Minter chuckled as he lighted a cigarette. "Much power lies in those slips of paper. Now what price are you prepared to pay for them?"

"In cash," Maude said, very quietly and simply, "I'll give you twenty thousand pounds!"

CHAPTER FIFTY-TWO.

The Price of Her Freedom.

MINTER appeared to be looking very thoughtfully into the fire. He had himself well in hand to-night, so that it was no trouble to him to conceal his feelings. All the same, he was bitterly reviling himself for a fool. Minter would have given his head at present for the sum Maude had mentioned.

A seasonable article in the August PEARSON'S is "The Life Story of a Red Grouse."

THE NEW PERMANENT CURE FOR CORPULENCE.

Enthusiastic Welcome by the British Press.

THIS is an age of invention and scientific discovery. Every week, almost every day, some new achievement or some new theory, often astounding in its significance, and fraught with the most wondrous possibilities, is recorded in the newspapers, until we seem to live and breathe in a new atmosphere. No branch of science has made greater progress within the last two decades than that of medicine, and amongst new medicinal agents none has been more cordially welcomed by the Press than the permanent cure for obesity now known to the world as "Antipon."

It must be said that with all the marvellous progress made in the healing science the cure of excessive stoutness—in reality a disease which threatens the development of other more serious diseases — has not received an adequate share of attention from the medical profession. Much advice, it is true, has been lavished upon us by dieteticians as to abstention from different kinds of food, &c.; but, unfortunately, the restrictions generally enjoined are of a starvation kind, or else are so disagreeable as to make eating a misery. Other conditions laid down are equally unattractive: exhausting exercises, the frequent use of cathartics, and so on; but—and this is where all these arbitrary systems fail—as soon as the restrictive and debilitating conditions are disregarded (the sufferer being, we will assume, reduced in bulk through sheer starvation) the superfluous unwholesome fat begins to form again with unerring certainty. There is no permanency in the cure; and to continue the weakening treatment for long is too great a strain upon the constitution, however strong it may be.

This is where the newly-discovered specific, "Antipon," differs fundamentally from all other cures. It needs no help. It is a treatment in itself. Instead of requiring any unreasonable abstentions from enjoyable foods and beverages it absolutely requires that the person taking it shall be thoroughly well nourished, so that, while the superabundant fat, both superficial and internal, is being gradually absorbed and ejected from the system, the muscular fibre shall be toned up and strengthened, and nerve force increased. On this subject the well-known journal, *Woman*, says in a recent article:—"Apart from the permanent reductive results of 'Antipon,' the tonic effects are amazing. The appetite of the patient is vastly improved, and the much larger amount of wholesome food taken goes to enrich the blood, with infinite benefit to general health and brain and nerve power." Again, *Weldon's Ladies' Journal* of May last, after pointing out the powerful reductive effects of "Antipon," says:—"It also forms a strength-giving tonic, improves the appetite, assists digestion, and tones up the whole system without the sufferer incurring any distressing restrictions as to diet, exercise, &c." This trustworthy opinion is supported by many other journals of influence, such as the *Young Ladies' Journal*, which writes in a recent issue:—"We unhesitatingly commend to the notice of our stout friends the marvellous new specific known as 'Antipon,' which fulfils every possible requirement. 'Antipon' is singularly efficacious in strengthening and solidifying the muscular tissue and giving tone to the whole organism, leaving the limbs nicely rounded and beautiful in shape (for it is only the superfluous fat that it destroys), giving back elasticity and grace of movement, life, energy, and buoyant spirits."

We have spoken of obesity as "a disease which threatens the development of other more serious diseases." Very corpulent persons are, in fact, in constant danger of fatty degeneration of the heart, liver, and kidneys. It is then that, to quote the *Illustrated London News*, "the burden becomes oppressive and causes alarm." "To such sufferers," continues the same journal, "'Antipon' should prove advantageous, because it not only speedily absorbs and throws out of the system all superabundant adipose matter, but increases strength and vitality." The condition indicated is indeed very serious, but the grave symptoms, such as difficult breathing, profuse sweating, sudden palpitation of the heart, with sharp pains in the side, &c., soon disappear under the curative action of "Antipon." The *Penny Illustrated Paper* (which, by the way, remarks that "in 'Antipon' the world is made richer by a marvellous discovery"), *Harrison's Dressmaker*, and other papers are emphatic as to the beneficent power of "Antipon" in eliminating from the system the dangerous masses of internal fat which clog the actions of the organs. As the *Lady's Realm* puts it: "'Antipon' is tonic, invigorating, and gives renewed vitality to the vital organs too long impeded by internal fatty deposits," and adds the memorable words, "It will prove a lasting blessing to thousands." Health, indeed, is mankind's greatest and most precious possession, and, as the *Sketch* proclaims, "Antipon," "this pleasant, rational, and most efficacious remedy, may be warmly recommended to stout persons of both sexes as much for health's sake as for the attainment of perfect elegance of figure."

The fat-reducing power of "Antipon" is fully equal to its health and strength-giving properties. In this respect we cannot do better than quote from an article that recently appeared in the *Methodist Recorder*, which, after saying, "It is satisfactory to know that 'Antipon,' the new cure, is the practical result of a specialist's researches and discoveries, so that reliance can be placed upon its efficacy," states that "'Antipon' may be counted upon to take off within the first day and night an amount of superfluous fat ranging from 8 oz. to 3lb., and the reductive action continues until the desired symmetry of form and figure is reached."

In a few cases of very excessive adiposity the amount of reduction in a single day and night has reached as much as 4lb. This, however, is rare. Afterwards the loss of weight day by day is steadily persistent, and when the bodily weight has reached the proper standard according to the height of the individual, the doses may be forthwith discontinued, with the full assurance that the cure is complete and lasting. Nothing more is needed but a prudent and common-sense observance of the rules of hygiene. The subject may satisfy a normal healthy appetite without any further anxiety.

The desire for wholesome outdoor exercise and recreation will come with the re-acquired slimness, and a healthy indulgence in these will serve to consolidate the cure and keep the subject in perfect condition.

"Antipon" is a pleasantly bitter, non-mineral liquid preparation, in appearance like a light French red wine. Amongst other unique qualities it possesses that of cheapness. The dose prescribed is small, so that a 2s. 6d. or a 4s. 6d. bottle goes a long way. "Antipon" can be had of chemists, stores, &c., from stock or on order, or should any difficulty arise, may be obtained (on sending cash remittance) post free, under private package, direct from the sole manufacturers, the "Antipon" Company, 13 Buckingham Street, Strand, London, W.C.

Another important point is that "Antipon" has been certified absolutely harmless by a number of medical men who, by special request, have investigated the component parts of the preparation, which has in consequence received the written approval and cordial support of these authorities.

Considerations of space prevent our citing many other notable articles that have appeared in influential organs of opinion with respect to this marvellous permanent cure for obesity, so we will conclude by a quotation from the *Sheffield Independent* which is worth remembering. It says: "With some people even a semi-starvation diet is apparently useless to prevent the persistent growth of adipose tissue. Thanks, however, to 'Antipon,' a new preparation which bids fair to revolutionise medical science as far as the cure of corpulence is concerned, anyone, however stout he or she may be, can look forward to a speedy and lasting cure of the disease."

"Antipon" The Great Permanent Cure for Corpulence

FATNESS

PERMANENTLY CURED BY

"Antipon"

SOME PLAIN FACTS.

"ANTIPON," the newly-discovered permanent cure for corpulence, is the most powerful fat-absorbent known. It destroys and expels all superfluous fatty matter with amazing promptness. It acts from the very first dose, producing within the first day and night a decrease in weight varying from 8oz. to 3lb. After this there is a constant daily reduction until natural graceful proportions are permanently attained.

"ANTIPON" not only reduces abdominal fat and ugly deposits that show themselves in baggy cheeks, double chin, and bulky limbs, it dissolves and eliminates the more dangerous internal fat which clings round the vital organs and which may, if neglected, cause fatty degeneration of the heart, liver, and kidneys, a condition of continual menace to life. Difficult breathing, sudden palpitation of the heart, and other grave symptoms of disease soon disappear after a short acquaintance with the surprising curative action of "Antipon."

"ANTIPON" is a builder-up of healthy muscular tissue; whilst the superfluous fat is being destroyed, the powerful tonic action of the medicine is proved by a keener appetite. More generous nourishment is taken. This makes rich blood—pure blood, the system being freed from waste fatty matter and other unwholesome deposits. That is the building process which goes on simultaneously with the clearing away of the dangerous deposits of fat.

"ANTIPON" dispenses with help from drugs of any kind—purgatives and sudorifics are alike unnecessary. No unreasonable restrictions as to living are required. On the contrary, those who use "Antipon" must feed "up," so that sound muscular fibre shall be a compensation for loss of weight.

"ANTIPON" is a pleasantly bitter liquid, non-mineral, and certified absolutely harmless by a number of physicians who have investigated the ingredients. "Antipon" has received the written approval and warmest support of these authorities. A course of "Antipon" makes a new being of a stout person, for with the permanent reduction of weight there is a revivifying of the whole system —a fresh endowment of strength and vitality.

"ANTIPON" can be had of Chemists, Stores, &c., price 2/6 and 4/6 per bottle, from Stock or on order, or should any difficulty arise, may be obtained (on sending cash remittance), post free, under private package, direct from the Sole Manufacturers—

THE "ANTIPON" COMPANY,

13, Buckingham Street, Strand, London, W.C.

Telegraphic Address—"CORPULENCE, LONDON."
Bankers—Union of London and Smith's Bank.

"Antipon" The Great Permanent Cure for Corpulence

"ANTIPON" can be had of Chemists, Stores, &c., price **2/6** and **4/6** per bottle, from stock or on order, or should any difficulty arise, may be obtained (on sending cash remittance) post free under private package, direct from the Sole Manufacturers—

THE "ANTIPON" COMPANY, 13 BUCKINGHAM STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

Bankers: UNION OF LONDON and SMITH'S BANK. Telegraphic Address: "CORPULENCE, LONDON."

but there was a very good reason why he could not see his way to complete the bargain.

Ready-money at the present moment was an absolute necessity to him. All his lovely schemes might fail yet for a little golden ointment for the machines; given that sum, and he would have backed his position against the world. Then, as he sat there, a pretty idea came to him. It was utterly unscrupulous, and absolutely worthy of the man, but he decided to put it into force.

"This is going to be strictly between ourselves," he said, hoarsely.

"Between you and me and Mr. Desborough," Maude said. She had certainly forgotten Kit for the moment. "Why should I tell anybody else? The only way to save Mr. Desborough is by keeping absolute secrecy."

Minter nodded. Really, when he came to think of it, he did not need those fatal bills. He knew now that Price had been deliberately hidden in Desborough's chambers; Maude knew the whole guilty secret, and if it became necessary to threaten Desborough again it would be easy to call Maude as a witness to his guilty knowledge. She would never have backed him up with a deliberate lie.

On the whole, Minter could see his way to play the philanthropist, and put money in his pocket at the same time.

"What do you want those bills for?" he asked.

"To burn them. I should burn them as soon as they came into my hands. Oh, I don't want to read them—there is shame and humilation without learning the details by heart."

Minter rose and paced up and down the room. He could have shouted in his exultation. After all, Maude was only a sentimental woman, and she would never know anything of business. The money was as good as in his pocket, his grip on Desborough would not really be relaxed at all.

"When do you propose to pay me the money?" Minter asked.

Maude thought the matter over for a moment. She knew perfectly well that the sacrifice entailed the sale of her diamonds, and that might take a day or two.

Doubtless Kit would see to that for her. She had heard Kit talk of a firm in Gracechurch Street where they bought gems to any amount, and paid for them promptly. The matter might be settled by Wednesday if no hitch took place.

"Shall we say Wednesday evening?" she said. "If I could have the papers to-night, if you would trust me."

"Oh, I can trust you fast enough," Minter said, with obvious sincerity. "There is precious little respect between men where business is concerned, but we all admire integrity, much as we sneer at it. I'll go further than that; give me your bill for that money at three days' date, and the papers are yours now."

Maude's heart leapt within her. She was actually going to have those papers *now*. Before she slept she would be happy in the knowledge that Desborough was free, and that he would not trouble her any more. Again she could at once free herself from the slimy tangle of the hateful business. Once she was out of it nothing would induce Maude to touch it again.

"Tell me what you want me to do?" she asked.

"Nothing very dreadful," Minter said, with a queer laugh. "I draw out a form on stamped paper whereby you agree to pay me £20,000 in three days and you sign it. You pay the money into your bank to meet it, and there is an end of the matter. It is very simple."

All this Minter explained quite gleefully. To-morrow he would be the master of a large sum in cash, a sum of money that was of almost a vital necessity to him. As a matter of fact, it would be more or less of a gift to him, for his position and power over Desborough were more secure than ever. Why, this transaction in itself was a proof of the things that he knew against Desborough.

"Come into the library," he said. "We'll settle everything in five minutes. I've got the forms there, and the papers are in my safe. It is a big price you are paying, and Desborough is a lucky man. Now, come along, and you can have your bonfire as soon as you like."

Maude found herself presently affixing her signature to an oblong strip of paper. With a sigh of relief that he could hardly conceal, Minter placed the document in his safe. Maude watched him with a little smile of contempt curling her lip. The thing was blackmail pure and simple, though Minter did not seem to see it. To him it was an ordinary business transaction. He rummaged about his safe for some time, then he produced a bulky packet in a foolscap envelope.

"Here you are," he said. "If I were you I should put sentiment aside and read those bills. It may not be pleasant literature of the Mudie type, but you would at least know that you had value for your money."

"I shall burn them as they are," Maude said, coldly. "Good-night, Mr. Minter."

Minter watched Maude depart with her head in the air. She had paid the man's price, and, if possible, she disliked and despised him a little more than ever. But that fact did not trouble the burly capitalist in the least. He had done an excellent stroke of business. He would restore his battered credit now, and pay such things as were a little more than pressing.

Maude went away with the precious papers clutched tightly in her hand. For the loss of her jewels, for the outlay of a sum so enormous, she cared nothing. All her trouble and misery had been brought about owing to her possession of that wretched money, and Kit had loved her for herself alone. Maude's plan was pretty clear, as she went in search of Desborough.

She found him presently in one of the morning rooms, a pile of papers before him, a half-smoked cigarette between his thin, hard lips. The man was far away by this time; he was deeply engrossed in his case. There lay the secret of his power. Maude had to speak twice before he looked up.

"What do you want?" he asked. "I am very busy just now. If it is not of importance——"

"It is of the greatest importance," Maude said. "More important than anything you have there. I have been trying to come to terms with Mr. Minter."

"You know perfectly well that he has only one set of conditions?"

"So he said. But those conditions were rooted in money, and money can do anything with a man like that. Suppose I induced him to part with those bills for a consideration, what then?"

Desborough jumped to his feet and commenced to pace up and down the room. The grey, tired look left his face, his eyes grew clear and bright. All the old ambition was pulsating within him, the darling ambition that had caused him to throw honour and conscience to the winds.

"In that case I should be free," he said. He spoke with his head high, he had almost forgotten Maude. "Nothing could touch me any longer, I should get back the power and grip that I have lost lately, I should compel my way as I have compelled it all along. But Minter would never do that."

He paused in his walk, his face grew dejected again.

"Things have altered," Maude said. "Minter seems to think that now he has Baron Kinski on his side, to say nothing of Mr. Murdock, he can do great things. I offered him a large sum for the papers."

"And he laughed at you for a fool, I suppose?" Desborough sneered.

"He did nothing of the kind," Maude said. "He listened. Look here, see what I hold in my hand. And without making any condition with you, trusting to your manhood and your better sense, I take the poisonous things and throw them into the fire there."

The envelope was dropped into the centre of the wood fire, and the mass at once leapt up in blue and yellow flame. Desborough watched in a dazed kind of way.

"I didn't quite understand," he gasped. "You say that Minter agreed to—and he parted with—impossible! He would never have done it. Maude, do you mean to say that the record of my folly, the whole story of my past, is burning there before my eyes?"

"I do mean to say so," Maude cried. "Never mind the power. There is your freedom, your *freedom*. And I am standing here waiting for the one thing you can do to atone."

"And what is that?" Desborough asked with his eyes on the leaping flames.

"Surely you must know," Maude replied. "There is *your* freedom—now give me *mine!*"

CHAPTER FIFTY-THREE.

A Hard Master.

Desborough made no reply, for Maude denied him the opportunity. She had done an act of amazing nobility and generosity. Of her own free will she had stripped herself of a large portion of her fortune to save this man from social and political destruction. Nor could it be urged that she had anything to gain by so doing; on the contrary, she had acted against her better judgment.

It was not as if she cared for him, as if she were making a sacrifice for the man she loved. Her whole soul turned with disgust and loathing from Clifford Desborough, and she would have freed herself from her fetters if she could.

She was going to leave it entirely to Desborough's generosity. She merely made the suggestion that one good turn deserves another. Nay, further, Maude had not even stayed to receive the thanks of the man she had saved. There were the fateful papers now a mere handful of glowing, flickering embers, and Desborough was alone with his thoughts.

Maude had saved him. Juggle with his own conscience as he might, he was bound to admit that. From the very first he had known that he must follow the crack of Minter's whip, and palter with his honour. He would have sacrificed everything to his darling ambition. And now he was once more free.

He drew a long, deep breath like a swimmer after an extended dive.

Minter could not touch him now. And those bills had disappeared like a millstone from about his neck. He was free in more senses than one. But once he took office he would be a poor man, and he knew the value of money. Why should Maude want what she called her freedom? His face flushed as he thought of it. Why should he let her go? Many other women would have been too ready to share lots with him. And, after all, Maude had done no more than she had to do. It was specious reasoning, but it seemed to satisfy the ambitious barrister in a way.

He would see Maude to-morrow, and have it out with her. He was going to town by an early train, but then Maude was always an early riser. Desborough breakfasted alone—there were breakfasts at all hours at Marvyn Chase—and afterwards asked for Maude. She was in the garden somewhere. Desborough looked at his watch, and saw that he had half an hour to spare.

He found Maude presently amongst the roses. She looked fresh and sweet as a rose herself; it seemed to Desborough that she had never appeared more beautiful. Youth and good looks and riches made up a fine combination. And Maude was clever, too. With a wife like that there was no reason why Desborough should not eventually become Prime Minister.

Maude laid the fragrant blossoms on a seat as Desborough approached. Her heart beat a little faster. She was not in the least afraid of this man; she knew now that she could sever the rope when the time came, or, at any rate, she fancied that she saw the way, but she preferred that the advance should come from Desborough. She hated and despised him from the bottom of her heart; yet she would have given much for one disinterested action from him.

"You wanted to speak to me?" she said.

"Yes, I have a little time to spare. You gave me no chance to thank you last night."

"I wanted no thanks. For your sake, and the sake of the mother who so admires you, I made a sacrifice. When you forced me into a hated engagement, there was an excuse for you. That excuse is now removed, and you are now a free man. God knows, you had fallen low enough in my estimation, but even still I hoped for you. I gave you credit for one generous, manly impulse. Surely you understand what I mean?"

Maude held out her hand with Desborough's engagement ring up it. He started back, and her face flushed. The time was coming for him to speak.

"I am afraid that I don't quite understand," he said.

"Surely you do. I want you to take that ring from my finger. Then no further word need be said."

The slender finger shook a little, the stones in the ring glittered in the morning light. Desborough pointed to the seat. A little disdainfully, Maude sat down.

"You have set me free," Desborough said. "Now I can look the whole world in the face once again. Not only am I beyond Minter's power, but that heavy load of debt has gone. And you have done this thing of your own free will. It is impossible to thank you."

"I need no thanks," Maude replied. "All I ask you to do is to take this off."

She held out her hand again, her fingers steadied by now. But Desborough ignored the request.

"So far so good," he said. "I can accept the offer which is certain to be made me now; it may lead to the highest post in the power of the Crown. But once I abandon my practice I am a poor man. I cannot afford to be a poor man. It will make all the difference in the world. But, as a rich man, with a beautiful and clever wife, I could do anything. Do you understand?"

"I fancy I do," Maude said with a curl of her lip. "Your wife would be part of the programme, a necessary piece of furniture in your political doll's house. You would select her as carefully as a builder selects his wood. Any such poor adjuncts as love and affection would be out of the question. And yet there are women who would not refuse."

"I don't want them," Desborough said in a low tone. "I only want you, Maude."

"And suppose I found it intolerable, suppose I left you, left you for the man I love! Ah, such things happen every day when the woman is bent to the breaking point. If you cared for me——"

"I do care for you, Maude. I love you, and I cannot let you go."

Maude rose to her feet, the crimson and yellow roses lay on the ground unheeded now. Her face was white, her eyes were very scornful.

"What do you know of love?" she asked. "You profane the name of it. You will not let me go because you love me. And yet you would not hesitate a moment if you know that my fortune had dissolved in thin air. There would be no struggle."

"Indeed there would, Maude. I don't think I could let you go in any case."

"That is not true. Let us understand one another. Little as you deserved any kindness at my hands, I have done you a great service. I had hoped to-day that you had felt the service and tried to repay it. I might have known better. I might have known that the scoundrel ready to take disgraceful advantage of a family secret would stick at nothing. Oh, have you a single good impulse about you, one redeeming virtue? How can I find words to express my feelings?"

"You would have me be a fool as well as a knave!" Desborough asked, sullenly.

"And yet you are both. You are a knave by chance and inclination; a fool because you think you can bend a woman to your will. I shall never be your wife now. There!"

Maude wrenched the sparkling circlet from her finger, and threw it passionately away. The mere freedom from the pressure of the ring seemed to give her ease. Without the slightest display of emotion, Desborough picked up the trinket and slipped it into his pocket.

"You will think better of that in your saner moments," he said. "I cannot let you go, because I care for you more than I ever thought to care for anybody, besides——"

"Besides yourself. You will never love anybody as you do yourself."

"Possibly not," Desborough said, coolly. "But I care very much for you, and I shall not let you go. I daresay you imagine that nothing so mean or contemptible has ever happened before, but you are mistaken. If you care to hold out the olive branch and be friends——"

"Friends!" Maude cried, with a dangerous gleam in her eyes. "Oh, yes, we shall be friends—up to a certain point. But I shall have no mercy on you now. I almost regret what I did last night. I ought to have let Minter degrade you and drag you down. Why don't you leave me? Why do you stand there between me and the blessed sunshine?"

Desborough walked slowly away. He had said his will, and gained his point as he thought. Really he had gone far to meet his own absolute degradation.

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CHAPTER FIFTY-FOUR.

The Countess Speaks.

It was some time before Maude could think of her flowers again; they lay on the seat at her feet neglected and forgotten. Maude had half expected something like this, but the truth was humiliating. She felt utterly sick and weary of the world, and inclined to trust nobody in it. But gradually it all came back to her, the faith, the hope, and the beauty of the day. She picked up the roses and buried her hot face in them.

"We'll play our trump card," she whispered, as if telling her secret to the flowers. "And if the rogue in the play does what one has every right to expect, then I shall be free, free. And once I am free there is to be no mercy for Mr. Clifford Desborough. He shall never be Home Secretary, never. Fancy a wretch like that having the power of life or death over poor creatures who are clean by comparison. He shall be punished, and I am the chosen instrument."

Maude walked thoughtfully back to the house. Most of the men had departed for town, including Minter. He was in an expansive, generous mood; he had a good thing which he did not mind sharing. His advice to all his rich guests was to buy Certified Shares. They could use their discretion about selling, but there were small fortunes to be made in the next few days. All this was very broad and good-natured on Minter's part, and he was voted a good fellow. It never seemed to occur to them that they were pawns in Minter's game. So most of them had gone to town eager to make money.

"I shall have to go, too," Maude smiled. "You see, I am also interested in the stock. How one picks up the jargon of the exchange here. I must go and see my trustees, May. And, at the same time, I am going to take our friend the Countess along."

Lady Mary agreed. Minter had mentioned the old lady again that morning. Lady Mary was kind-hearted enough, but she was terribly afraid of her husband.

"What are you going to do with her?" she asked.

"Take her home with me for the present. I have written to my mother to meet me this morning at Paddington. I daresay we shall manage to make the poor old thing comfortable."

So Maude departed at length, taking the Countess along. Mrs. Beaumont was waiting at Paddington; the Countess seemed to take to her at once. The whole thing sounded quixotic to a degree, but there was a great deal here beyond mere good nature. Countess de Lary was going to be a valuable ally later on.

"No, I am not coming with you," Maude said. "I am going into the City, where I have an appointment with one of my trustees, Mr. Shackleton. I shall be back late in the afternoon."

Maude took a hansom and proceeded to Fenchurch Street. She had hitherto hated the City and its ways, but now she was as interested as Minter himself. In the private office of Mr. Shackleton she waited, idly turning over the pages of the early edition of the evening papers. She looked with some curiosity to the City news. She read the headlines, "Foreign Rails Dull," "Strong Market in 'Certifieds,'" with a slender thrill. There was a good deal she could not understand, but she could make out that in some way Minter and Murdock and Kinski were sending up the stock she was so greatly interested in.

And behind all this the drama of love and plot and passion were being played. Business men glanced at the slim figure there, and wondered what so much loveliness was doing there. Maude found herself presently in the presence of her trustee. He was very busy, he said, but——

"I understand," Maude smiled. "But you are going to give me all your time. Mr. Shackleton, I want you to sell all my shares in the Certified Company."

The man of business smiled. But he listened with the deepest attention as Maude proceeded with her story.

"And that is all I have to tell," she concluded. "You are the one friend of the family who knows the tragedy of my poor sister Alice's life. I want to stop that tragedy, and give her the right to hold up her head again and appear before the world. Day and night I have been thinking this out, and now Fate has shewn me a way. Is my scheme wild and impracticable?"

"It's splendid!" Shackleton cried, "really splendid. And it looks all so dry and legal, too. If the shares go up another two points, as they are certain to do, I shall sell. Then there will be a surplus of £50,000 odd for your sister Alice. Immediately we shall go to the court for instructions as to what is to be done with the sum pending proof of your sister's death."

"But there will be no hint as to her story!" Maude asked, anxiously.

"No occasion for that, my dear Maude. The case will be reported in the papers, it will look so commonplace and natural that it is bound to have the effect you desire. Really, you should come in with us, a head like yours is wasted on mere Society. But I am heartily glad for poor Alice's sake. Only you had better leave her where she is for the present."

"Of course," Maude sighed. "Any move on my part might be fatal. Of course, the man Price had not the slightest idea I am aware that Alice is alive. And now I fancy that I can safely leave matters to you. If you only knew how I loathe the City."

Mr. Shackleton laughed as he shook hands.

"Let me whisper a word in your ear," he said. "Strictly between ourselves, we all hate it. I never knew a man who really didn't in his heart. Tell me you know as soon as the sale is effected, and the next day we will apply to a judge to know what to do with Alice's share. Good-bye."

Maude felt easier and lighter in her mind than she had done for some time. She had been just a little afraid that Mr. Shackleton would deem her scheme wild and impossible. Given one little thing, and she would be absolutely free, and Alice would be free also.

"Well, I declare, I haven't seen you looking so bright for a long time," Mrs. Beaumont said as Maude came in smiling to tea. "What have you been doing?"

"Making money," Maude said, gaily. "A wonderful place is the City."

Countess de Lary sat up, and her eyes sparkled. The mere mention of money aroused her. The gambling spirit in her was not dead, it was doubtful if it ever would be.

"Tell me all about it, my dear," she asked. "That is the talk that does me good. It warms my blood and makes me feel young again."

Maude would willingly have passed on to another topic, but the Countess prattled on. Baron Kinski was at the bottom of all her rambling discourse. Some day or another she would be even with him, and then she would come into the fortune of which he had deprived her. Mrs. Beaumont slipped from the room, leaving Maude to bear the brunt of the conversation alone.

"Well, you might see your Baron presently," she said. "He is coming to England, you know; in fact, he has already sailed for Europe. I read it to-day in one of the papers."

The Countess chuckled, her eyes had grown very bright and cunning.

"I saw it too," she said. "It is all nonsense; what you call hanky-panky. They say that man is coming, that he was interviewed before he started. And, behold, I know better, because at this very moment he is in England. They say he is coming to a great house in Park Lane. Why does he not come when all the time he is in England?"

"But surely," Maude protested, "surely there must be a mistake on the part——"

"Oh those imaginative newspapers, my dear. I tell you that man is in England. I forfeit my precious jewels if such is not the case. Some of these early days I will point him out to you with his glossy hair and beautiful black beard. A black beard! Oh, oh."

The speaker laughed as if something heartily amused her.

"Is the man an impostor?" Maude asked.

"But yes, an impostor the greatest. Baron Kinski, with his black beard. He is no Baron at all, but an English adventurer, who is wanted on the Continent. When I knew him first—but that is what your great novelists call another story. Ah, if you could see us meet——"

"What would happen then?" Maude asked.

"I would pull his beard off," the Countess said. "But no occasion to do that. When he comes face to face with me I get all that he robbed me of, everything, perhaps more. Ah, and I have never noticed that piano. Will you play me something?"

(To be concluded shortly.)

The meanest man in the world was the husband who placed his money in a mousetrap, so that his wife could not get it in the early morning without liberating a mouse.

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The True Adventures of an Actress.

By BLANCHE EARDLEY.

Mrs. Wilfrid Hyne, the Woman with the Scar.

THAT night when I arrived home after the performance, a lonely journey now, except when I called for Dolly, I found a letter for me in the dear, familiar hand of my lover. I seized it eagerly with beating heart. In his trouble he had come to me for comfort, and oh, how glad I would be to do away with all pretence, and own myself in the wrong!

I opened it with fingers that trembled with excitement. As I read it, a numb sensation crept over me, and I shivered.

"I have discovered all," it began. "All your duplicity and heartless conduct, not only towards me, but many others—the letters to your lover, Paul Dean, have been sent to me, and I have no other feeling for you but unutterable loathing for the worship I once had, and even retained on the night we parted. You and your friend, with whom I saw you this afternoon, will doubtless laugh together over my financial downfall, for you will consider yourself well rid of me. And perhaps you will be right."

That was all, and what hurt me most was the cruel imputation about my laughing over his loss. Had he remembered, I wondered, that I had always warned him against Lionel Dacre? But he was hand in glove with that treacherous man now, and I was powerless to do anything.

Suddenly I determined to make one effort to outwit my enemy Lionel Dacre, and save the man he was trying to ruin—the man I loved. He had apparently kept his word, and given the original letters of "Paul Dean" to Wilfrid, but it appeared that neither he nor Wilfrid knew that Paul Dean and Lord Paulton Nairne were one and the same.

I did not feel inclined to wait up for Dolly, but I inclosed Wilfrid's note in another from myself, telling her that Lionel Dacre must have done his best to blacken me in Wilfrid's eyes even still more, and I asked her to think over a plan by which we could pay off old scores.

The next morning Dolly was her sanguine self as usual, though she did not once refer to Paulton Nairne, and I was too wrapped up in my own troubles to ask the cause of her sudden change the day before.

"Why not keep that appointment that was made anonymously some time ago?" she suggested. "Anyway, you may learn something that will help, and I have an idea that it concerns Mr. Lionel in a way."

I sprang to my feet with a cry of surprise. "It was made for the seventh of November, too, and to-morrow is the day! I am glad I told you about it, Dolly," I added, "I nearly forgot it."

When the hour for the appointment came I shrank from it, feeling that something would happen. Besides, I hardly liked going to the Albany since Wilfrid might possibly be there, but Dolly laughed at my objections, and said earnestly:

"He will not be there, Blanche, dear; there is such a thing as a *bogus* telegram, you know!" she laughed, "and I don't fancy Mr. Hyne will be at his chambers when you go."

"Oh, but Dolly," I sighed, "what is the use of it after all? He hates me now; why should I try to clear myself in his eyes or to pry into his life? I am no longer in the position to ask questions."

"Nonsense," she said brusquely. "Perhaps you will learn something that will clear the clouds away."

I shook my head, but when I arrived at "No. 18" my heart stood still with silent terror.

I was shown into a huge room that I guessed must be the dining-room, for I had never before been in Wilfrid's chambers, but the man had admitted me with the remark that I was expected, and I waited with mingled feelings of excitement and fear.

Suddenly the door opened, and I heard a clear, silvery voice say:

"I am glad to see you again, Miss St. Lawrence, though I regret to say my husband is not here to meet you."

I turned quickly—that voice was familiar, strangely familiar, and then with a tightening of my breath I once again saw the woman who had lured me to the house in the suburbs—the woman with the scar on her wrist!

She came into the room as though she lived there, and her face looked brilliantly livid, while a mocking smile played round her mouth.

"You!" I cried, recoiling. "I don't understand—you mentioned your husband—who is he?"

She laughed lightly. "That is what I wish to tell you! My husband, whom I love with my whole heart, is the man who has so cruelly deceived you—Wilfrid Hyne!"

"Wilfrid Hyne!" I murmured, perplexed. "What are you to him?"

She closed the door gently, and faced me with an insolent laugh.

"How dense you are, Miss St. Lawrence. Don't you understand? I am Mrs. Wilfrid Hyne."

I Learn the Truth.

For a moment the room seemed to be going round me, and I clutched at the back of a chair to prevent myself from falling. Then, as I regained control of my senses, I saw the mocking beauty of the woman who claimed to be the wife of the man I loved—in spite of the break between us, his love had been the one oasis in the desert of my disillusion during my theatrical career. And now this woman was flaunting me with her airs of proprietorship!

A smile of peculiar softness curved her full, voluptuous lips as she said:

"Naturally you feel rather annoyed that your pretty face should after all have failed in attracting the serious attentions of—my husband! And as I was quite prepared to be met with incredulity, I have brought a practical point to prove that I am not making a bogus claim."

"Well," I said coldly, "what is this wonderful proof, and why have you so long hidden your light under a bushel? Surely your enforced absence from your husband's roof must have given him much worry, especially"—I went on emphasising each word slowly—"when he could only see you at *restaurants*."

She bit her lip, and flashed a vindictive glance at me from between her long lashes.

"There is the proof I mentioned," she said, ignoring my words. "It is something that even your face and tricks have failed to obtain, Miss Eardley—a marriage certificate!"

With an insolent laugh that brought a hot wave of colour to my cheeks she flung on the table a white document, oblong in shape.

I opened it silently, and then read what was the death-knell to my faint hopes of a reconciliation in the distant future, with the man whom I had loved so sincerely. For in black and white, I saw that on June 3rd, 1888, at the Church of St. David's, South Kensington, was solemnised the marriage between Anna Sevrino, spinster, daughter of Count Antonio Sevrino, of Turin, Italy, to Wilfrid, bachelor and writer, son of the late Colonel Rupert Hyne.

That was all, but it was sufficient to show me how utterly I had wasted a wealth of affection upon a man so little deserving! But I was determined not to show that I was hurt by the news.

So I smiled carelessly, and said:

"This is very interesting, but it would have concerned me more, had I still been engaged to Mr. Hyne. As it is, we have broken off our engagement, so his domestic secrets can have no possible claim on my attention, though it is very good of you to confide in me!"

"Broken off your engagement?" she murmured. "Since when?"

I smiled. I had scored to a certain extent over this glittering Circe, and my cool announcement had evidently been a bolt from the blue.

"To be engaged to a successful rich man is one thing, but when that man loses all his money over some unfortunate Stock Exchange dealings, he ceases to become such a desirable husband for a comparatively successful actress."

"Lost all his money—what do you mean?" she said, in a low, tense voice.

"I refer you to your friend, Mr. Dacre?" I mocked, "he will be better able to post you in the latest details of Wilfrid's—I mean your husband's—financial failure."

I watched her narrowly as I spoke, and saw that instead of the look of consternation that should naturally be maintained when a wife learns of her husband's misfortunes, her face only revealed an expression of rage and chagrin.

She opened her mouth to speak, but just then the noise of a door being violently shut stopped the words on her lips, and a gleam of malicious satisfaction sparkled in her eyes as she said:

"That is Wilfrid now. So you will see for yourself, my haughty young Miss *St. Lawrence*, whether I was right in claiming him for my husband, and as for your story about his having lost all his money, that is a fabrication of your own made-up out of pique to conceal the fact that he jilted you! Ah"—she laughed—"that shaft went home, did it? Now you will see for yourself, that my husband owns me as his wife!"

I made a movement towards the door. My cheeks flamed with mortification that I should be found in the chambers of the man who had thrown me over, and, worse still, in conversation with the woman who flaunted her "marriage lines" in my face.

"You will only meet him in the hall," she laughed exultantly, "your escape is cut off. If you wish to hear without being seen your only chance is to get behind that curtain near the window. Then you can convince yourself of sufficient proof."

Still I hesitated, until the sound of a step that I knew too well fell upon my ears, and, seeing that there was no other course for me to pursue save that of ignominiously concealing myself in the room and witnessing an interview between the man who had once wooed me so ardently, and the woman who proclaimed herself as his wife, I slipped behind the curtain just as the handle of the door turned, and someone entered the room. From between the folds of the curtain I could contrive to see, as well as hear, and my lips trembled as I caught a glimpse of Wilfrid's pale, hollow face, as he stepped forward into the light.

"You here!" he said bitterly. "Can't you even let me have this place in peace? Have you not had money enough from me, that you must badger me in my home?"

So then he was not glad to see her! My heart grew warm with a sudden glow.

I waited for the woman's reply to this unloverlike speech, and when it came, her voice sounded harsh and jeering.

"So Wilfrid—that is the only welcome for your devoted wife, is it? Perhaps it would be more impassioned had you come to find—say—your jilted lady-love, in the room instead of myself."

"Be silent, woman!" he cried impatiently. "Don't dare to profane the name of the only woman I have ever loved by mentioning it in the same breath as your own."

I clutched the curtain with feverish fingers. Oh, the joy that mingled with the shame in listening to him casting aside all pretence, and owning that once, at least, I was all in all to him.

"So," the sneering voice continued, goading him to a white heat of fury. "So you vindicate her now, do you—and to your wife, too. For you can't deny my right to that title, can you?"

"By God, no!" he groaned. "I almost wish I could! You have ruined my life. But don't dare to imagine that I—I jilted her. I released her from—from all obligations when I lost my money, and became practically a beggar!"

Although I could not see her face, I could imagine from the tone of her voice that it was haggard with discomfiture and rage.

"It's true, then?" she cried shrilly. "Your money is lost! She was not lying when she told me that?"

"She," he exclaimed quickly, "whom do you mean? Tell me," he went on unsteadily, "who told you about my financial ruin?"

"Who told me?" she mocked—"how anxious you seem to know the name of the lady! Since you must hear it then," she laughed shrilly, taking a step nearer the curtain behind which I stood quivering with anticipation and terror of what was to follow—"I will let her speak for herself!"

With a rapid gesture she tore the curtain aside, and for a moment, that seemed an eternity to me, only the quick short breathing of three human souls disturbed the stillness in the room.

At last I heard Wilfrid's voice. It was low and sounded far off, like the distant rumbling of an approaching storm.

"What is the meaning of this? Why is—this lady here?"

The woman who was his wife laughed. "I thought it high time that Miss St. Lawrence should learn that her *fiancé* was a married man, and wrote asking her to come here. She, in her turn, informed me that she was no longer engaged to you because a penniless, broken man was no catch for an ambitious actress!"

"Go, woman, leave me before I forget that I am a man!"

Laughing mockingly, she swiftly left the room, and the next moment we heard the hall-door bang.

With a mechanical gesture I picked up my card-case that had fallen to the ground, and would have passed him without glancing at him, when he stopped me.

"Before you go," he said in a strained, dull voice, "let me explain that—that woman——"

"She is your wife!" I flashed. "Can that *fact* be explained away?"

"No," he cried passionately. "It can't. Heaven help me!"

"Then," I retorted, "there is nothing else to be explained, Mr. Hyne. Let me pass, please!"

He came nearer to me. "At least, you will allow me to tell you that I was not such a blackguard as to ask you to marry me, knowing that another woman had the right to my name?"

I smiled coldly. "I will not attempt to gauge the motives that actuate the conduct of any man. May I trouble you to let me pass."

He opened the door silently, then laughed bitterly. "Well, after all, I have no right to complain. Fate is showing me the back door of her favours now, and I must expect to be left with the ruins of my life, as rats leave the sinking ship."

I could not trust myself to speak. Afraid lest a glimpse into his weary, bitter face should rouse all the old, dormant love that nothing could quite crush—not even the sight of another woman's marriage certificate.

As I went along the hall I heard him close the door firmly, and the significance of the action suggested to me the shutting of life's door upon all that the world contained of Love, Hope, and Ambition.

I reached our flat—Dolly's and mine—within twenty minutes, and as I stood outside the drawing-room door, I heard a masculine voice mingling its deeper notes with those of Dolly's rather staccato ones. "Are you sure?" she was saying. "It would be awkward if we found we were on a wrong tack!"

The man laughed softly, and somehow the laugh was familiar to me.

"But we are not, you see," he murmured; "before very long we shall have our proofs, and then they will be nicely laid by the heels."

I opened the door suddenly.

As I entered the room, a man rose slowly from the depths of a chair, and came towards me. He was Lord Paulton Nairne!

All's Well that Ends Well.

I LOOKED from one to the other in amazement. "Do you have re-introduced yourselves?" I said, with a slight smile. "I am glad."

"I called to see you," Paulton said gravely, "and finding Miss Allgrace at home, I accepted her invitation to stay until you arrived."

"Yes," Dolly chimed in flippantly. "Lord Paulton at first was unable to get over the fact that an actress differed from the leopard in the respect that she *could* change her spots, in my case 'hair.'"

I laughed drearily. How their careless, good spirits jarred with the note of misery that was surging within me.

"You look tired and worn-out," Paulton said quickly. "I had better go now, and come when you are more rested."

"Have you news for me, then?" I said quickly. "If so, please tell me—now!"

He flashed a glance at Dolly, and her eyes seemed to answer him. Then she turned to me, and remarked carelessly:

"Blanche, I have just remembered that there is a 'call' for to-morrow at eleven at the Friv., and you know what a beast that Teddy MacLone is over the songs, so if you don't mind I will go and run over my scores until dinner is ready!" With a bow to Paulton she left the room, then I turned to him feverishly.

"Tell me now what it is you want to say, but you can say nothing worse than that I have already heard."

"What have you heard?"

"I have seen and met with—Mrs. Hyne," I murmured in a low voice. "So you see there is nothing more for me to know, the episode of my 'engagement' to Wilfrid Hyne is a thing of the past!"

He did not seem surprised. Instead he smiled, a slow, gentle sort of a smile, that stopped at his eyes.

"I intended to tell you that I had made one or two interesting discoveries," he went on, "but must wait till Saturday's American mail before I speak definitely."

"America!" I exclaimed. "What has that to do with me?"

"A great deal more than you imagine, Blanche," he replied gravely. "But now I want you to write to Lionel Dacre at his

The last instalment of "The Amethyst Box," Anna Katharine Green's serial story, will be found in the August LADY'S MAGAZINE.

club, and ask him down here to tea on Monday. I"—and he grinned suddenly—"will help you to entertain Mr. Dacre."

I opened my mouth to protest, but Paulton went on quickly: "You must act, Blanche, as you never acted before. Lure him to betray himself, and talk of his friendship with Wilfrid Hyne!"

Before I could answer he had gone.

But I had my work at the theatre to attend to, and in spite of an aching heart still was obliged to go through with my part of "Madge Wingate."

I noticed that the house seemed very empty, and after coming off at the finish of my "big" comedy scene, Bill Willington came up to me.

"I said so, Blanche—the notice goes up on Friday night, when the ghost walks! Poor Hyne, this coming with his 'on Change' losses, will be a nasty smack in the eye."

I turned away. "Poor Hyne" indeed! My heart ached for him, but I could not bear to discuss him with anyone.

I heard from Lionel Dacre, in reply to my stiff little note, accepting for Monday, and as the day drew near I grew nervous with apprehension lest my temper should get the better of my discretion. But I greeted him calmly as he was shown into the empty drawing-room.

"So we are to be friends again, Blanche," he said.

"Now I am free," I said lightly, "you have come to woo me; is that it, Lal?"

"Yes, Blanche," he said, in a hoarse whisper. "I have come to ask you to be mine—for ever mine—I—I love you."

I cast a frightened look at the door, wondering whether this was what Paulton had intended me to wring from him, and what was to be my next move.

"Tell me," he said, coming closer, "will you be my wife?"

"If you will tell me one thing," I said quickly, "I will in turn answer your questions."

"Anything!" he replied, "I will tell you anything!"

"Then," I went on, "how did you contrive to make such a fool of—of Wilfrid Hyne?"

He paused, then said with a laugh: "Oh, well, since its e.p.h. between you, I don't mind telling you that I won his confidence."

"You mean," I said clearly in a voice that I tried to keep from trembling with excitement, "that you got him to trust his affairs in your hands and that you betrayed him?"

"That's the ticket!" he said brutally. "Come, any more questioning before I am to—take my kiss!"

I kept him off with a gesture—my eyes had caught the curtain at the end of the room, the folds of which had quivered ever so slightly.

"Have you told me the truth," I went on, in the same rigid tone, "about the woman in—in scarlet I saw at that house—the woman who lured me there with her?"

"Don't let us talk about that old harridan," he murmured, "I hate her—I only love you, Blanche."

At that moment the curtains were wrenched aside violently, and two figures rushed into the room. One was Lord Paulton Nairne—the other—Wilfrid's wife!

Oblivious of my presence she rushed up to where Lionel Dacre stood, petrified with rage and astonishment.

"So," she cried harshly. "You have betrayed me, have you—you low worm. I have a good mind to confess everything, and show you up!"

An ugly look crossed his face, and he raised his hand threateningly.

"You had better be careful," Paulton said quickly. "This is a lady's drawing-room, not the 'Bowery' in New York."

The woman laughed callously.

"Oh, he dare not strike me! He did once—that was enough!"

She then saw me, and smiled bitterly. "So you have probably surmised that I was lying the other day. Well, I will tell you the truth now—not for your sake, but because I wish to pay that brute back! I am not Mrs. Wilfrid Hyne! And my husband is——" She stopped, as a man dashed from the door leading into my boudoir right up to her.

It was Wilfrid—Wilfrid looking white and startled. "Not my wife!" he said, clutching her arm. "Then who are you—woman?"

"I am your dead wife's twin-sister Lenore," she said. "When you divorced her, she came to New York, and begged me, if ever I got a chance, to injure you in any way I could. The scar that she got in struggling to kill you with the dagger, I easily painted on my wrist, and then when she died I grew hard-up, and thought if I could find you I could make money by blackmailing you in pretending to be your wife. As you were engaged you did anything to keep what you thought your disgraceful secret from the girl's ears. I easily got what I wanted by writing you on the crimson paper that Anna used to use. Then"—she paused a moment—"I got a double motive to ruin you. The man I married in New York wanted to do you a bad turn. That is the man!"

She pointed to Lionel Dacre, who turned a livid face to me. "This is your doing, is it? I wish I had told them to kill you, when my charming wife planned it. I was a fool to have opposed her."

With a last bitterly vindicative look they passed out of our sight.

Then Wilfrid put out his hand and grasped that of Lord Paulton in the silent shake that says so much.

"Thank you, Nairne," he said simply. "Your message to bring me here this afternoon has given me a new hope."

Paulton pushed Wilfrid gently towards me.

He then left us and we faced each other.

"Darling," Wilfred said at last. "May I beg you to forgive me—to—to take me back into your heart?"

"Oh, don't say that, Wilfrid. It is I who need forgiving for the past, not you. You have never been out of my heart."

He drew me into his arms with a glad little cry.

"May we come in now, please?" called out Dolly. "We are just aching to congratulate you, and——"

"And to be congratulated!" said Lord Paulton.

Then one look into Dolly's softened face told us all we partly guessed.

"Yes," she said, laughing. "I have condescended to confer upon Paulton the honour of becoming the husband of a 'Frivolity Girl,' in spite of my distrust of the aristocracy."

As Wilfred and I started off on our honeymoon, Wilfrid drew me to him closely, and said:

"My star is indeed in the ascendant!"

THE END.

OUR "ONLY" COLUMN.

The Only Men and Things of the Kind on Earth.

Field-Marshal who Began as Sailor.

Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood is the only man who, after beginning life in one service, the Navy, has joined another, the Army, and risen to the very highest rank in it.

The Channel Swum.

The only time when the English Channel was really swum, from land to land, was when the late Captain Matthew Webb swam from Dover to Calais in August, 1875, taking 21 hours 45 minutes to do it.

St. Simon Unbeaten.

The only great horse in England that has never been beaten is St. Simon, now known as the "Pride of Welbeck," where he stands as the chief stallion of the Duke of Portland's stud. Ormonde, also, was never beaten, but he is no longer in England.

Prime Minister with Moustache.

The only Prime Minister with a moustache is the unique distinction of Mr. Balfour; all his predecessors being either clean-shaven, like Lord Rosebery and Mr. Gladstone, or having beards as well as moustaches, like Mr. Balfour's uncle, Lord Salisbury.

One Battle Honour.

There is only one regiment in the British Regular Army which boasts but one battle honour on its colours, and that is the 21st Lancers, who have the simple record, "Khartoum," an honour they won at Omdurman, when they made their famous charge, in their baptism of fire.

Two Chamberlains in Cabinet.

The presence of both the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain and his son, the Right Hon. Austen Chamberlain, in the Cabinet, the one as Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the other as Postmaster-General, is the only instance in our generation of a father and son being in the same Cabinet.

Married Two Dukes.

The only woman who has married two dukes is the Duchess of Devonshire. When she married her present husband she was the Dowager Duchess of Manchester, having earlier married Viscount Mandeville, who in time became Duke of Manchester. By the way, the often-made statement that the Duchess is an American is a mistake; she is German.

Father and Son V.C.'s.

The only instance of a father and son both gaining the Victoria Cross is in the case of Earl Roberts and the late Hon. Frederick Roberts, his son, who was fatally wounded at the disastrous battle of Colenso, and never recovered consciousness, and so never knew he had been recommended for the honour. Queen Victoria is said to have personally presented the Cross to his mother, Lady Roberts.

To "Maffick."

The only celebration of an event which has added a word to the language is that of "Mafeking" night, in honour of the Relief of Mafeking. The unfortunate horseplay which accompanied it rendered it historical, and to indulge in similar behaviour now is called to "maffick." The word was first used by the PALL MALL GAZETTE, in allusion to the conduct of the crowd on the day of the return of the C.I.V.'s, and passed into acceptance immediately.

Once Heir to the British Throne.

The only man who has twice been heir to the throne of Britain without having his expectations realised, is H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge. This he was at two different periods: for the first two months of his life, till the birth of the Princess Victoria, daughter of the Duke of Kent, and afterwards the beloved Sovereign; and again from the Queen's accession to the birth of her first child, the Princess Royal, afterwards the Empress Frederick of Germany.

Citizen and Hereditary Autocrat.

The only ordinary citizen who is at the same time a hereditary ruler and autocrat is H.H. Sir Charles Johnson Brooke, Rajah of Sarawak. In 1842, his uncle, Sir James Brooke, known in history as Rajah Brooke, obtained a concession of territory from the Sultan of Brunei. On subsequent occasions further concessions were obtained and the agreements made valid by the British Government. Rajah Brooke died in 1868, and Sir Charles then succeeded. His eldest son, Charles Vyner Brooke, is heir to what we may call the principality, and bears the title of Rajah Muda. The Rajah's power is absolute. There is a legislative body to assist him, but the appointments to it are by him, and not by popular election. He has been granted the title of His Highness, and has been entitled to a salute of guns to the same number as a ruling Indian native prince, with whom he stands upon an equal footing.

Duke of Devonshire.

The only man who has ever definitely refused his Sovereign's offer of being Prime Minister of England is the Duke of Devonshire. This was in 1880. Mr. Gladstone's retirement from the leadership of his party, after the great Conservative victory that followed his own first administration, in 1874, caused the position to devolve upon the Duke, then Marquis of Hartington; and when the Liberals were returned with their great majority, six years later, the late Queen sent for their leader; but he, instead of forming, or trying to form, a Government himself, prevailed upon Her Majesty to send for Mr. Gladstone, and himself induced the Grand Old Man to accept the honour. The Duke had another chance, in 1886, after the Home Rule split, when as leader of the Liberal Unionists, he had the confidence of the nation; but he said the Conservatives were in greater number, and their leader, Lord Salisbury, was the proper man to be Premier. Thus the Duke twice refused the highest position open to a British subject.

HOW TO KEEP COOL.

Cold Baths, Food, and Drinks are a Mistake in Summer.

By THE CANTANKEROUS CRANK.

ONE takes cold more often in summer than in winter. Why is this? Because we are continually varying the temperature of our bodies by attempts to keep cool, which really heat us all the more.

Such things as cold baths, cold joints and salads, cold drinks, thin underclothing, open windows, fans and ventilators, bring us cool spasms, but do not permanently lower the temperature of the body. They make us cool one moment, but hot the next. Obviously this is the surest way of taking cold.

What we want in warm weather are warm things. We should seek to raise the temperature rather than lower it. Anything which produces a perspiration should be indulged in. Accordingly we should entirely remodel our lives during the summer months. I have followed this rule for many years, with the result that I rarely take cold, and am, as a matter of fact, the coolest man going.

I never change my style of clothing from one year's end to the other. That motto, "Ne'er cast a clout till May is out," is nonsense. You should never cast a clout at all. I would as soon think of dropping over London Bridge as of dropping woollen underwear in summer. When I wake up in the morning during a heat wave, I slip into my thick woollen underclothing almost eagerly. I know quite well that at noon, while other people are fuming and fanning themselves, and drinking iced drinks, I shall be like the proverbial cucumber, as a result of the perspiration brought about by my system of clothing.

I would not dream of taking a cold bath in summer. It stands to reason that the coolness I derived from it could not last more than half an hour. After that, I should be as hot as I could be. To go and plunge into a cold bath when steaming with heat is suicidal to some people, as it causes a violent change in the temperature.

To take a hot bath, on the other hand, throws one into a perspiration, and a great coolness follows. In India, where I spent my early youth, one never on any account takes a cold bath, only a warm one. And what Indians do not know about heat and methods of keeping cool is not worth knowing.

Most people in summer have cold meat for their meals, and salads with oil and vinegar. I don't. My dinner in July or August consists of hot joints, steaming hot potatoes, and other vegetables, followed by a hot rolly-poly pudding, or something equally cooling. I drink tea, coffee, or warm lemonade, and never have cheese, as it is apt to bring on a false coolness.

When I go out into the sun, of course, I have perspired so freely that I am in a delightfully cool state. I always drink sweltering hot tea in the middle of the afternoon, to cool me, with delightful results.

I have the misfortune to share my sitting-room with a fresh air fiend, who persists in opening all the windows wide in summer. It is a source of constant disagreement between us, as he will not see that the only way to keep really cool is to sit in a room of an even temperature. A window blowing in cold currents imparts only a spasmodic coolness, which is certain to bring on a cold.

We have settled the matter by occupying different rooms. I take the dining-room, where I keep all the windows closed—and, when the temperature is just below 80, have a roaring fire, while he has the drawing-room with all the windows open, a ventilator going, and a cold water bath for his feet. The only difficulty is that on no account can we meet during the evenings, as either of us would take instant cold by entering the other's apartment. I did once go into his room to ask for some tobacco, but wore a fur coat and muffler as a precautionary measure.

Another mistake many of us make is sleeping in sheets during the summer. This is all right during the winter, when perspiration is a rarity, but in summer, when it is likely to occur, a sheet is a fatal thing to have next to the skin. In summer I always sleep in blankets, which have absorbing qualities. It is known fact that fever patients invariably sleep in blankets. Obviously, therefore, so should we in hot weather.

A hot water bottle, too, is a good precaution in summer, for keeping the body at a normal warmth, but is not indispensable. I have one myself during July and August.

I cannot hope that many readers will indorse these ideas of keeping cool during hot weather, but like all other speakers of the truth, I must expect to be alone until posterity proves me to be in the right.

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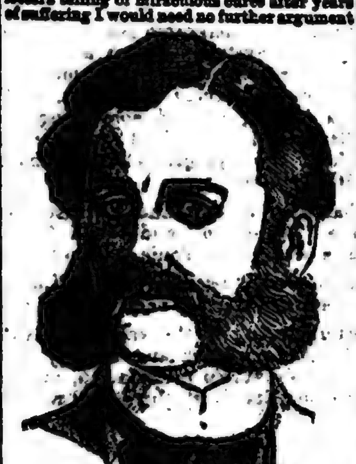

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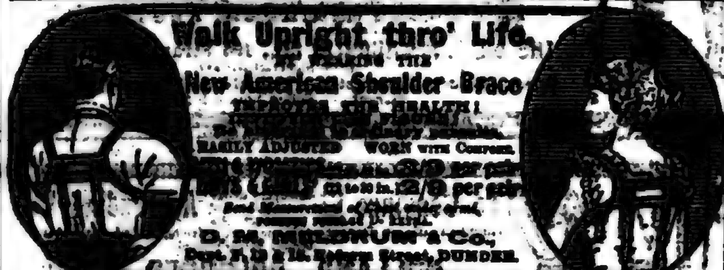

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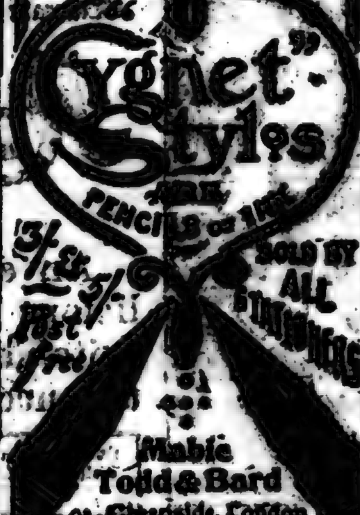

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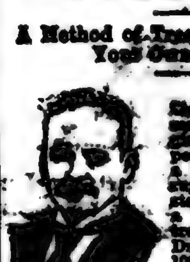

Mr. G. Thomas.

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There are many people who, without being definitely unwell, are what is called "below par"—that is, they lack something of the Vigour of robust Health.

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Miss M. Robbins, of Eglinton Road, North Bow, London, writes:

"For upwards of two years I have been in a Weak and Ailing condition. I am "now writing to let you know of the immense benefit I have derived from your "valuable preparation, 'Guy's Tonic.' It has much improved my Appetite, which "had long been failing. I know nothing of Flatulence now, although I was far too "well acquainted with it previously. I was in a fearfully Weak state before taking "'Guy's Tonic,' but now I feel as Strong as ever. I am thankful to say that I "once more enjoy perfect Health—thanks alone to 'Guy's Tonic'—and considering "the low state I have been in, from one cause and another, this is, indeed, something "to rejoice over."

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People with Back Pains.
People with Rheumatism.
People who Feel Run Down.

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ELECTRO VIGOUR

is the newest, strongest, and best electric body appliance for sick and weak people. It quickly cures Rheumatism, Lame Back, Kidney and Stomach Troubles, Sleeplessness, and all pains. It strengthens, tones, and expands the physical energy. Its touch is magnetic.

£1000 reward will be paid for the Dr. McLaughlin Co's Electro Vigour which does not give a current which can be felt and regulated by the wearer.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Call and see this wonderful appliance if you can. Remember, when you use Electro-Vigour you are under the care of a qualified physician. Consultation and examination free. If you cannot call, we will send you our beautiful 64-page book, with full information. It is free if you cut out this advt. and send it in.

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HARMLESS TO ANIMALS.

KILLS BUGS, FLEAS, MOTHS, BEETLES

Sold in Tins, 3d., 6d., 1s. each

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The PUBLIC are CAUTIONED that my Powder is sold only in Tins. None genuine unless the signature of Thomas Keating is on the outside label.

Sulpholine Lotion.

For Clearing the Skin from Spots, Blemishes, Redness, Roughness, giving a Beautiful Complexion and pleasing appearance.

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How to obtain Free Boxes of Rowntree's Chocolates Write directly for particulars to "Elect Coupons" Rowntree, York.

Isobel will be glad to answer questions of general interest upon household matters so far as space permits. A pretty pencil-case will be given to each reader whose inquiry is dealt with on this page. Envelopes should be marked Home Notes Page.

For Soups cut cucumber into slices, fry it, and add it to the soup in the tureen.

When Cooking a Leg of Mutton the introduction of a clove of garlic will be found a great improvement by those who like savoury dishes.

Meat that has Begun to Turn may be quite restored by washing it in water in which a teaspoonful of borax has been dissolved, having first cut away every part the least bit tainted or discoloured.

Remove Marking Ink from Linen thus: Paint the mark with cyanide of potassium applied with a camel's hair brush. As soon as the ink disappears the linen should be rinsed in cold water. (*Reply to* Redditch.)

When Covering Jam Jars use the white of egg and white paper. Directly the pots are filled, wipe free of anything sticky, brush over a square of white kitchen paper with the egg and put on at once. The heat of the jar quickly dries the white of egg, and makes an excellent substance of it. (*Reply to* Brockley.)

Fish Sandwiches are very good if prepared as follows: Remove the skin and bone from boiled fish with two forks. Add a tablespoonful of cheese, one of hard-boiled egg, and sufficient cream or butter to moisten. Mix in a bowl, add salt and cayenne to taste, spread on thin slices of bread and butter, and cut into fancy shapes.

A Useful Medical Book. "The Mother's Guide," by Lydia Leney, M.D., is simply written, and only costs three shillings and sixpence. It is just the book you need, I think. Any bookseller will obtain it for you, or you can order it direct from the Publishers, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C. (*Reply to* Mrs. Mackay.)

To Analyse Water. Put a small pinch of permanganate of potash into a wineglass. Do not stir it, but just observe the colour; if of a dull claret or maroon, be sure it is impregnated—the worse the colour the greater the danger. In the case of well water make a point of testing it at least once a month. (*Reply to* Abbetillery.)

A Good Store Salad Dressing. Put the yolks of two eggs in a basin and with a wooden spoon work in two tablespoonfuls of vinegar, one of tarragon vinegar, and one of elder vinegar, then add by degrees one pint of best salad oil, working it in thoroughly with the spoon, add salt to taste, a few drops of anchovy essence, then a tablespoonful of made mustard. When all is well blended add a small spoonful of powdered sugar and a little cayenne. Bottle for use and keep in a cool place. (*Reply to* Peggy.)

Everton Toffee. This sweet will not hurt the children at all, and they will enjoy making it themselves during the holidays. Place three ounces of butter in a brass preserving pan, and as soon as it is melted, add one pound of brown sugar. Stir this gently over a moderate fire for a quarter of an hour, or until a little bit of it dropped into cold water is brittle. Directly the toffee is boiled to this point it must be poured off or it will burn. It is an improvement to add a little grated lemon when the toffee is half-cooked. (*Reply to* The Boys' Mother.)

Are You Fond of Needlework, or do you ever help in Church work by making Almsbags, Altar Cloths, or Stole Ends, because there are four beautiful designs in Home Notes, dated August 6th, of which transfer patterns may be had if required, and instructions are given of the stitches. This is only one of the many features contained in that helpful little paper. It also tells you how Sea Bathing is sometimes injurious, and how to make a Cosy Corner for your home, and, indeed, a great deal of good and wholesome information can be had for the purchasing of Home Notes every week, price one penny.

To Clean a Galvanised Bath. Thoroughly wash the bath first with soap and water, and then scour it with paraffin and sand. You will find that this treatment cleans it splendidly. It is well to wash it with soap and water before using it. (*Reply to* M. S. S.)

To Clean a Leghorn Hat. Stir one teaspoonful of powdered sulphur into the juice of a lemon. Brush this mixture well into the hat with a toothbrush, and when quite clean place it under a tap and let water run over it to free it from the sulphur. Dry in the air, out of the sun. Brush over with white of an egg. (*Reply to* Warrington.)

Convent Eggs. Make some good onion sauce, and let it simmer for five minutes. Season with pepper and salt, and put on a hot dish. Arrange quarters of hard-boiled eggs in a circle on this, outside it have sippets of toast. Have some sliced onion fried a nice brown in butter, and arrange on the eggs. Scatter chopped parsley over and serve very hot. (*Reply to* Storey.)

To Keep the Hair in Good Condition. Take half an ounce of camphor (finely powdered), moisten with two tablespoonfuls of gin. Put this into a pint bottle and fill up with water. Apply with a sponge to the roots of the hair twice every week. Brush the hair at least once daily, using a brush with rather soft long bristles. This treatment will promote the growth of the hair, besides keeping it clean, soft, and glossy. (*Thanks to* A. Kitchen.)

To Cook Cod's Roes. The following are two good recipes: (1) The roes must be washed, then scalded by being put in a sauce-pan with cold salted water to cover them and brought quickly to the boil, the water thrown away, and fresh boiling water poured over the roes to remove any scum; when cold cut in pieces. Wrap each piece in a thin slice of bacon, dip into good frying batter, then drop into a pan of deep fat heated till it throws off a blue smoke, drain, and serve very hot, seasoned with pepper, Parmesan cheese, or parsley. (2) Boil the roes, and when cold coat them with mayonnaise sauce, and serve them on a good salad, using any garnish of prawns, olives, eggs, etc., that may be convenient. (*Reply to* M. B.)

A Summer Soup. As you have a garden this soup will cost you practically nothing, and I am sure your husband will appreciate it. Take equal quantities of French beans, green peas, and new potatoes, a few young carrots, half the quantity of other vegetables in haricot beans, some good stock, and chopped parsley. Soak the haricot beans for twenty-four hours in cold water. When ready to make the soup drain the beans, cover with cold water and boil for two hours. Drain, and add the stock, boil gently for another hour or so. Prepare all the vegetables and add to the stock cut small. Pass two tomatoes through a sieve, boil all till tender, and at the last moment add the parsley. Season well with pepper and salt. Serve with fried bread. (*Reply to* M. H. King.)

To Clean Sheepskin Rugs. Cut up a bar of soap and dissolve it in two gallons of boiling water. Put two quarts of this lather into a tub and add two gallons of nice warm water. First rub out the dirt and grease spots with the strong soap liquor, or, if preferred, with Fuller's earth. Then put the rugs into the tub containing the diluted lather, well wash and punch it. Throw away this liquor, and mix another lot with the same proportions of soap. Wash the rug again, and so continue till it is quite clean. Then rinse in cold water to take out the soap, and afterwards in cold water slightly blued. Wring out the mat, shake it, and hang up to dry with the skin side towards the sun (but not in very strong sun, or the skin will become hard and brittle). While the skin is drying, shake it frequently, and hang it first by one end and then by the other. (*Reply to* A. G. C.)

Queen's Tartlets. These will be just what you want for your picnic. Line some patty pans with pastry, and into each put a little jam, without stones. Make a sponge mixture of two eggs, the weight of one in butter, caster sugar, and flour, and a little baking powder, flavour to taste. Beat all together for ten minutes. Put a layer of this over the jam thick enough to rise to the patty pan when cooked. Bake in a hot oven for fifteen or twenty minutes, not opening the door if you can help it. Whilst the tartlets are baking, boil half a pound of loaf sugar in a quarter of a pint of water for ten minutes, then add a few drops of rose-water. Turn into a basin, and when cool stir the syrup round and round until it looks milky white, spread it over the top of the tartlets and smooth it flat with a knife dipped in hot water. After icing all the tartlets stand them in a very cool oven for a few moments to harden. (*Reply to* Mrs. Bon.)

Isobel

Holidays for 1900.		1900. July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.
Good Friday	April 13.	S 1 8 15 22 29	S 5 12 19 26	S 2 9 16 23 30	S 7 14 21 28	S 4 11 18 25	S 2 9 16 23 30
Easter Monday	April 16.	M 2 9 16 23 30	M 6 13 20 27	M 3 10 17 24 31	M 1 8 15 22 29	M 5 12 19 26	M 3 10 17 24 31
Whitsun Monday	June 4.	T 3 10 17 24 31	T 7 14 21 28	T 4 11 18 25	T 2 9 16 23 30	T 6 13 20 27	T 4 11 18 25
Bank Holiday	August 6.	W 4 11 18 25	W 1 8 15 22 29	W 5 12 19 26	W 3 10 17 24 31	W 7 14 21 28	W 5 12 19 26
Christmas Day	December 25.	T 5 12 19 26	T 2 9 16 23 30	T 6 13 20 27	T 4 11 18 25	T 1 8 15 22 29	T 6 13 20 27
Boxing Day	December 26.	F 6 13 20 27	F 3 10 17 24 31	F 7 14 21 28	F 5 12 19 26	F 2 9 16 23 30	F 7 14 21 28
		S 7 14 21 28	S 4 11 18 25	S 1 8 15 22 29	S 6 13 20 27	S 3 10 17 24	S 1 8 15 22 29

SHOULD PARENTS INTERFERE WITH CHILDREN'S LOVE AFFAIRS?

It is Generally Better for them not to do so, but Everything Depends on Circumstances.

This is a debatable question, and a good deal could be said on either side.

It stands to reason that nearly every parent would say "Yes" and every young person "No," and, looking at the matter in an unbiased way, an outsider might be inclined to agree with the young persons.

But experience counts for a good deal here, just as it does in other things; and parents ought to know better than their children concerning such things as love-making and matrimony.

However, the correct answer to the above question probably lies somewhere between Yes and No; there are some things in love-making with which parents certainly ought to interfere, and there are others which ought to be left entirely to the young folks.

A parent cannot be too particular, for instance, where the character of a daughter's lover is concerned, and a mother is quite justified in making inquiries as to the kind of family her son has selected a sweetheart from. Things of that kind do not come under the classification of interference; they are matters of common prudence, and are to be commended.

But there is one thing which should be avoided, that is prying into affairs; thus, if a daughter has a lover and he and his people are eminently respectable, then it is very wrong to try to ferret out all about his ancestors.

Yet this is quite common, and not only the young man, but the girl will also resent it, and there you have the beginning of trouble at once.

We may presume that a father and mother know more about the world than their child; I say "we," for you will not get the child to believe it; a parent has experience; he or she knows what a battle matrimony often is, and parents are good judges of character, as a rule.

Now, if a girl falls in love with a man she is blinded; love covers up his weak spots, and it may be, cloaks his vicious habits; the girl will stick to him through thick and thin.

Well, if a parent sees a daughter going about with an evidently worthless man, is it not his or her duty to interfere? It is, but the parent won't be thanked; on the contrary, he or she will be sorely blamed, and alas, too often by rank outsiders, for be it remembered that a couple in love have many sympathisers, and if parents meddle with them the lovers get plenty of pity.

The difficulty is to get children to see that parents are really trying to do their best for them; and it is a real difficulty; not one young person in a thousand can be brought to see matters in that light.

They argue that it is interference pure and simple; what can an old father or mother know about love? Nothing; so the young ones go on, it may be to the bitter end.

When parents interfere in children's love affairs their position is not enviable, for interference but fosters determination to gain the end in view; then if, say, the girl weds the man, and he turns out badly, she is just too apt to turn on the parents and blame them for not absolutely refusing to let her have anything to do with him.

On the other hand, if he turns out well the parents will still be blamed—what a shame it was to try to part the loving pair, and so on. Thus you see parents have to go warily.

But parents have to look to their own interests too, at any rate, where daughters are concerned, for if a daughter be permitted to marry a worthless man, what may it mean to them?

It may come heavily on the family purse, for if they love the girl, and the young couple happen on evil days, be sure the man will trade on the parents' love of their child; in a word, he will bleed them thoroughly.

It is altogether a delicate question this, and each case has to be left to the individuals concerned; few outsiders can make a parent see that it would be injudicious to interfere with a child's love affairs, nor yet can one show a child that a parent has any right to interfere.

Love is such a fickle thing that, taking an all-round view of the question, it is perhaps best for parents to let things go and not interfere, for in any case it will be resented; and woe be to the father or mother who prevents a girl marrying a certain man if he marries another girl and gets on well in the world; that parent's lot is by no means a happy one.

'Tis indeed a thankless task to meddle with young folks' love affairs. No matter how a parent acts, he or she will come in for some kind of condemnation, if not from the young folks, then from outsiders.

If parents prevent a girl marrying, and she grows up into an old maid on their hands, be sure they hear of it day by day, and it is no use their pointing out the misery she has avoided, if, say, the man has turned out a worthless character, for there is always the argument ready that had she married him things would have been different; she would have kept him going straight, she is sure of that, and the parents are practically told that not only have they blighted her life, but the man's also.

CAPITAL LETTERS.

A penknife will be awarded to each person whose letter is dealt with on this page, or whose suggestion for a title is used.

READERS will notice that the page of Questions Worth Answering, which is a feature of *P.W.*, is omitted from this number. This has been done in order to give more space for seasonable matter, and the page will make its reappearance next week.

A. F.—Many thanks for the newspaper cutting. Your surmise is quite correct. The Mr. George Home referred to is not the Mr. P. Doubleyou offered as a prize. The latter is a single young man, and a member of this staff (which Mr. Home is not, and never was), and is prepared to stand by the announcements which have been made concerning him.

A NUMBER of hungry men and lads from a neighbouring warehouse went to a coffee-house and ordered dinner, the cost to each to be equal. After they were all well filled, the bill came to twenty shillings and a farthing. How many dined, and what was the cost to each? If you know, send your reply on a post-card to the DINING EDITOR.

"WHICH make the better artists' models, women or men?" asks T. B.——That depends on the kind of model required. From a business point of view, I believe men are found very much more easy to deal with. And another point which I mention with all respect to my fair readers, but on the authority of a celebrated scientist, is that a perfect male figure is far more easy to find than a perfect feminine one. In the olden days it was, of course, different, but the Venus of to-day is tight-laced out of all symmetry. The man, on the other hand, develops as much as Nature intended him, though too much muscular development mars many a figure from the artist's standpoint.

"If a doctor were to inoculate himself with disease germs for the benefit of science, and should die as a result, would he be a suicide?" asks W. E. T.——I do not know of a fatal result from such an inoculation in Britain. However, the law is clear on the point. A person who commits suicide is either insane or a felon. In the latter case the crime is known as *felo de se*, and means that the person has killed himself as a result of some felonious motive. To convict the doctor in question of suicide one of these causes must be proved, and that is for lawyers to do. The point outstanding would be whether the doctor had or had not inoculated himself with intent to kill, and whether the term "suicide" would strictly apply. In Germany, by the way, the Government has passed a law stopping these inoculations, as a result of the death of a well-known doctor who tried plague bacilli. But German doctors and scientists are up in arms against the decree. To my mind, however chivalrous these inoculations may be, there is something unnatural and morbid about them which does not set a good example of the duties of life to less learned people.

F. T. asks: "From which seats are most people killed in railway accidents, those facing the engines or those with their backs to it?"——It is impossible to give figures in such a matter. I should deduce, however, that the man backing to the engine has most chance of saving his life in an express smash, supposing him to be in the train dashing into another. The action in a collision is generally something as follows: The engine is violently arrested, but the carriages to its rear continue their progress, either being brought after a few seconds to a dead standstill, or telescoping each other. On their suddenly stopping, the passenger, who is himself moving at the rate of the train, is violently thrown forward at, say, sixty miles an hour, to crash into the wall or seat opposite. A passenger facing the engine would be thrown the width of the carriage, and could scarcely escape injury, save by sheer good luck. The man backing to the engine, however, could not be thrown forward, but would simply receive a violent shaking, without necessarily fracturing any member. In the event of telescoping, of course, the crashing waggons would show no respect to either party, whose fate must be a "toss-up." But there can be no rule in the matter, as accidents vary so much in character.

RESULT OF THE "CRICKET" COMPETITION.

PENKNIVES have been awarded to the following competitors:

E. H. Couch, Cook's Cross, South Molton, Devon; J. E. Darbon, 3 Yardley Road, Small Heath, Birmingham; G. Hedned, 63 Blair Athol Road, Off Greystones, Sheffield; H. E. Ackroyd, 3 East View, South Kirkby, near Wakefield; J. Crane, 75 Clifton Street, South Wigston, near Leicester; J. Holmes, 12 Eaton Street, Everton, Liverpool; J. Lister, 14 Hope Street, Runcorn; Miss N. Hunt, 11 Lower Todd Street, Heywood, Lancs.; W. E. Glover, 17 Skipton Road, Fireshill, Sheffield; J. S. Castle, The Chestnuts, Allbrook, Eastleigh, Hants; Miss J. Warder, Gretton, near Winchcombe, Glos.; Miss Olive Townley, 17 Russell Road, Kensington, W.; E. H. Ogden, Sandford Road, West Derby, Liverpool; A. Woolf, 43 East India Road, Limehouse, E.; L. Newman, The Abbey, Kildalky, co. Meath; C. Urch, "Bryn Glas," 1 Llanover Road, Pontypridd; J. P. Allen, 1 Wanlip Street, Junction Road, Leicester; J. Ellis, Havelock Street, Oswaldtwistle, Lancs.; W. Robertson, Craigrothie, Fife; A. Pryor, Winchester House, E.C.; E. Chapman, "Gloddeth," Grove Road, Ramsgate; H. Williams, 1 Harringay Gardens, Hornsey, N.; H. Hill, 39 Cross Street, South Blakenhall, Wolverhampton; H. C. Boulcott, "Upcross," Westend, Hants; A. H. George, 33 Ripon Street, Halifax.

A PENKNIFE will be given to each of the twenty-five readers who sends in on or before Tuesday, August 11th, the cleverest sentence, of not more than twelve words, in which each word ends with the letter "S." All attempts must be addressed to the ESS EDITOR. Post-cards only to be used, except where competitors wish to inclose stamps for the FRESH AIR FUND.

"WHO is the more sensible," asks H.M., "the man who talks, illustrating his sayings with his hands, or the man who keeps those members still?"——Needless gesture is irritating, or affected. In a Briton, it is unnatural to make gestures in speaking. A foreigner, however, is naturally more animated on the surface, and therefore uses his hands easily and gracefully when conversing. The rule should be that every man use his hands as much as is necessary in expressing his meaning, and no more.

"THE other day," writes C. B., "I was walking along the street on a business errand. I saw in front of me a lady I knew, who was walking much more slowly than myself. Should I turn round and recognise her, and if so, would it be rude of me to pass on in front of her, without walking with her?"——If the lady appeared to notice you when you caught her up, certainly take the opportunity of bowing to her. If, however, she was unaware of your approach, and you were in a hurry, it might be better to pass on. When a man is obviously in a hurry, and on business, no lady would expect him to stop and walk with her.

"WHEN meeting a family or a large party of friends," writes R. O., "who, one and all, say in passing, 'Good-morning, Mr. Brown,' what should I say—merely 'Good-morning,' which is repugnant and impolite, or should I salute each one in turn, which would take up some time?"——It would be foolish to greet each one in turn, and not in accordance with social usage. The "Good-morning" should be addressed in particular to the head of the family or party, his or her name being added, and the others should be saluted by one broad and inclusive lift of the hat and smile. There is an art in greeting a crowd which requires some tact to display. The idea is to greet each individual by a sort of sweeping glance, in which the eye falls on each one in turn, but on the leader of the party in particular. On no account address each person by name singly, unless you wish to obstruct the traffic of the street, and make a conspicuous figure of yourself.

W. E. wears a pink ribbon round his straw hat. Most of his friends wear a plain black one. "Why," he inquires, "is black so generally worn when coloured ribbons are so much more becoming?"——Probably coloured ribbons are more becoming if a man has good taste enough to select one suitable to him. There is, of course, nothing to prevent a man wearing what ribbon he likes on his hat. But it is not strictly "good form" to do so, as certain clubs and regiments possess a sort of unwritten right to colours, which are generally respected. To wear a ribbon which is acknowledged as the badge of a well-known club or regiment rather suggests that the wearer wishes to appear something different from what he is, which, of course, is not very noble. The pink ribbon of your own hat, by the way, is the colour of the most exclusive rowing club in Britain. By wearing it you are apt to be asked whether you belong to the club in question, which might be embarrassing under such circumstances.

"ARE American police-cells better than those of our own country?" asks O. P., who has experienced the home variety for one night, and does not think much of it.——The older police-stations of New York, and the less modern cities, do not inspire envy in the British delinquent. I certainly would not care to consign my neighbour's dog to a night in one of them, far less a human being. They are mostly ill-lighted, unventilated, and squalid. The sight of a New York petty offender in one of the foul cages of the "Tenderloin" police-station inspires pity even in the warders, who are not above throwing in a packet of cigarettes. But the new *régime* has made wonderful changes. The newest prison, just rebuilt, is the Tombs, the cells of which, to the casual eye, look like dressing-rooms in a Turkish bath. The cells are roomy, lighted by electricity; there are spring beds, and good chairs and tables. The walking space outside is ample, and there is a bath to every half a dozen inmates. A lift takes the prisoner to his quarters, which might be those of a large banking house for all the discomfort there is. The female prisoners are even more fortunate, as, in addition to equally good cells, they are allowed to sit together, read, or talk. The "Tombs" is not, of course, a penal establishment, but simply a prison for those awaiting trial. Accounts that reach us, however, tell wonderful tales of the luxuries of some of the newer State gaols for convicts.

MR. EDWARD BORE, of Messrs. E. Bore and Son, Kington, Herefordshire, has been kind enough to forward a hundredweight of delicious cake to Loughton, and the children who were fortunate enough to be there on the days on which it was eaten, thoroughly appreciated it.

THE following are the next special F.A.F. excursion days: August 4th, Marsuma Day; August 5th, Bile Beans Day.

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